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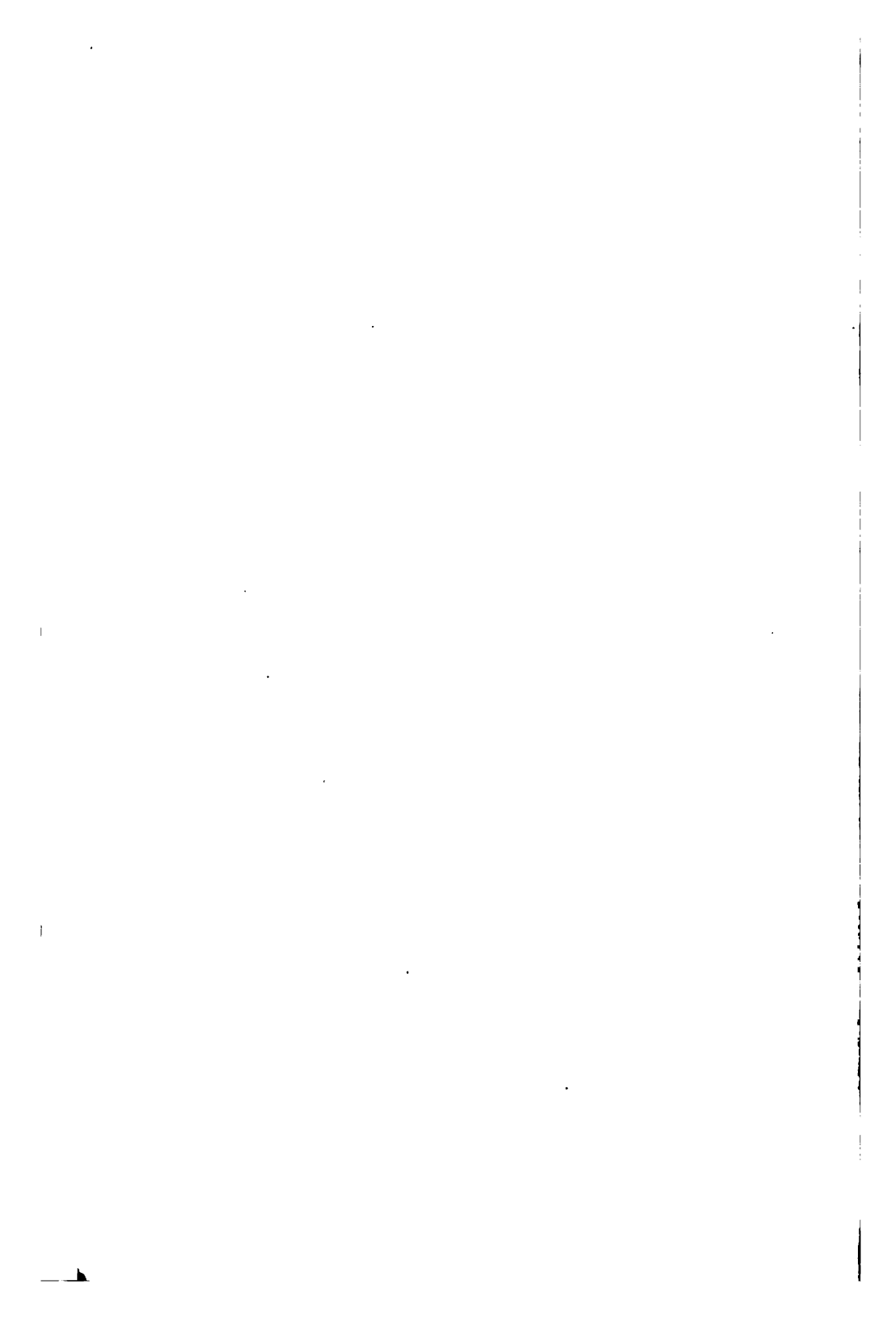


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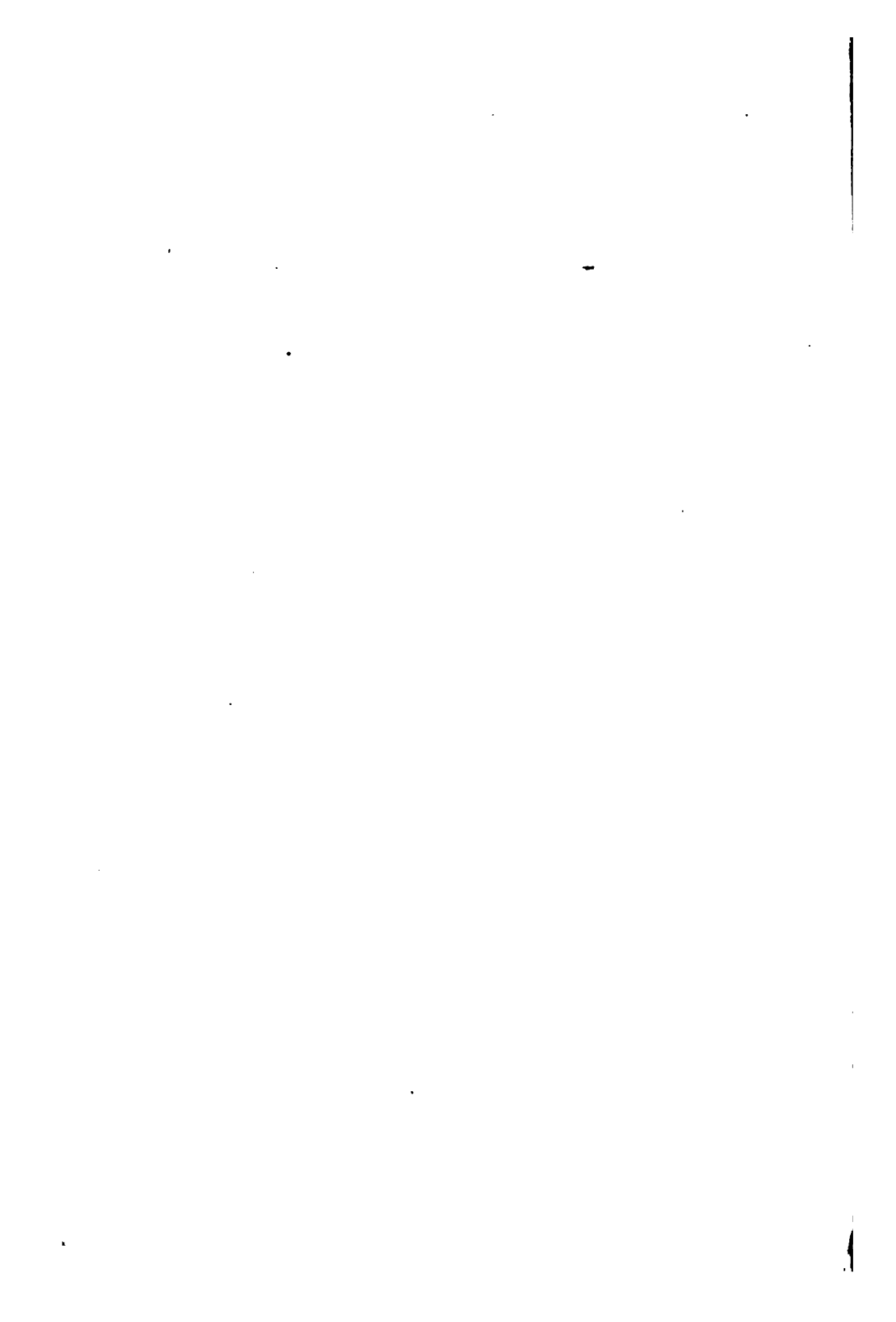








THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF MOLIÈRE.







Desobry del.

Stuart scul.

## THE MISER.

Act I. sc. 3.



THE DRAMATIC WORKS  
OF  
M O L I È R E

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH  
BY HENRI VAN LAUN - 7027

A NEW EDITION  
*WITH A PREFATORY MEMOIR, INTRODUCTORY NOTICES, AND NOTES*

ILLUSTRATED WITH  
NINETEEN ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL  
FROM PAINTINGS AND DESIGNS BY  
HORACE VERNET, DESENNE, JOHANNOT, AND HERSENT

COMPLETE IN THREE VOLUMES  
VOLUME III.

NEW YORK  
R. WORTHINGTON, PUBLISHER  
1879

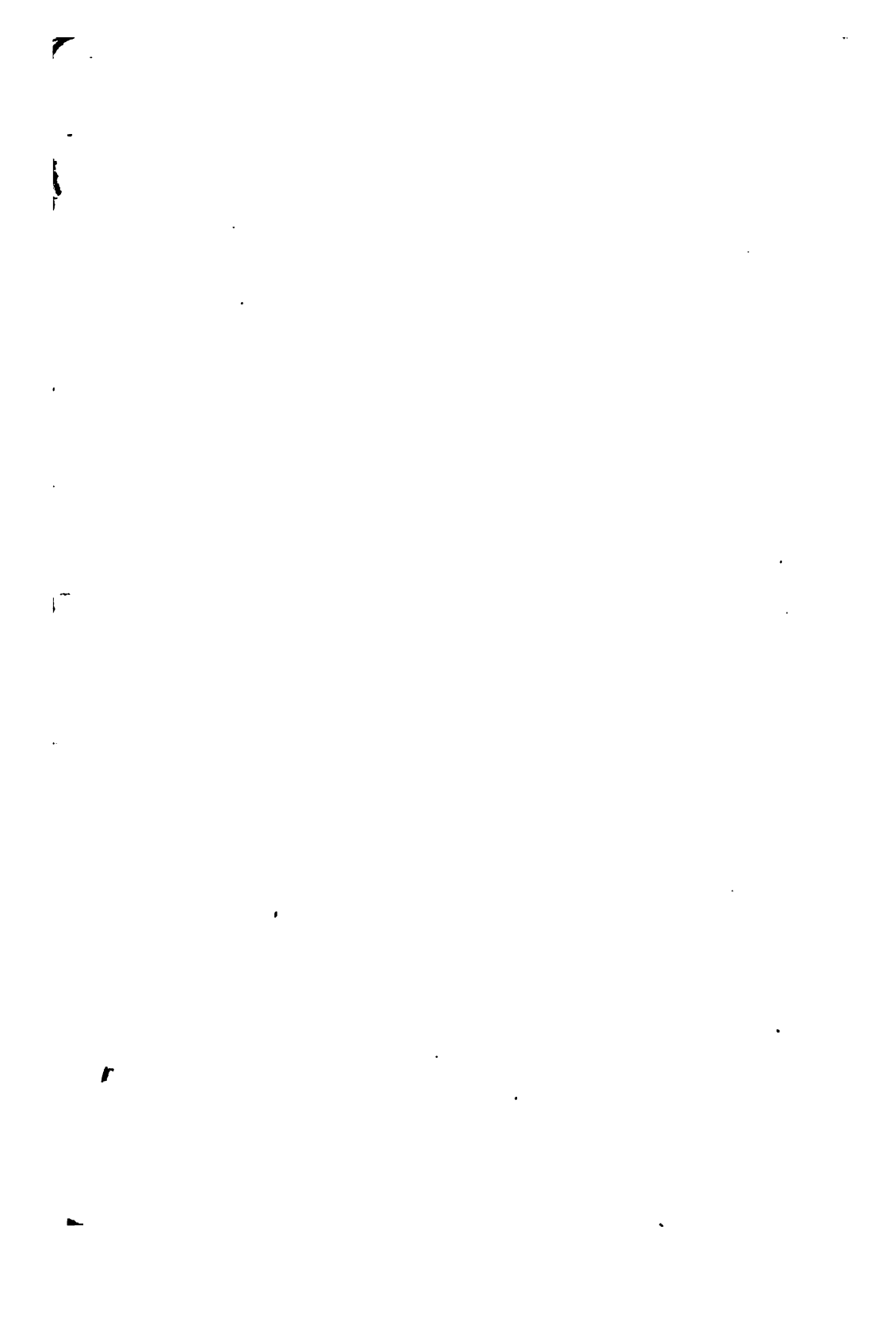




# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

## VOLUME THIRD.

	PAGE
THE MISER.	
<i>L'Avare</i> . . . . .	I
MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC.	
<i>Comédie-Ballet</i> . . . . .	83
THE MAGNIFICENT LOVERS.	
<i>Les Amants Magnifiques</i> . . . . .	139
THE CITIZEN WHO APES THE NOBLEMAN.	
<i>Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme</i> . . . . .	193
PSYCHE.	
<i>Tragédie Ballet</i> . . . . .	277
THE ROGUES OF SCAPIN.	
<i>Les Fourberies de Scapin</i> . . . . .	<del>299</del> 329
THE COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS.	
<i>La Comtesse D'Escarbagnas</i> . . . . .	395
THE LEARNED LADIES.	
<i>Les Femmes Savantes</i> . . . . .	421
THE IMAGINARY INVALID.	
<i>Le Malade Imaginaire</i> . . . . .	483
THE JEALOUSY OF LE BARBOUILLE.	
<i>La Jalousie du Barbouillé</i> . . . . .	573
THE FLYING DOCTOR.	
<i>Le Médecin Volant</i> . . . . .	593



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

## VOLUME THIRD.

	PAGE
I. THE MISER. Act I., Scene 3.	
<i>L'Avare</i> . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
II. MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC. Act I., Scene 16.	
<i>Comédie-Ballet</i> . . . . .	112
III. THE CITIZEN WHO APES THE NOBLEMAN. Act III., Scene 2.	
<i>Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme</i> . . . . .	225
IV. THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN. Act II., Scene 9.	
<i>Les Fourberies de Scapin</i> . . . . .	371
V. THE LEARNED LADIES. Act III., Scene 5.	
<i>Les Femmes Savantes</i> . . . . .	457
VI. THE IMAGINARY INVALID. Act I., Scene 1.	
<i>Le Malade Imaginaire</i> . . . . .	497

\_\_\_\_\_

•

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1

# GENERAL INDEX

TO THE

## THREE VOLUMES.

---

	VOL.	PAGE
PREFACE.....	1	i
PREFATORY MEMOIR.....	1	xix
AMPHITRYON .....	2	455
BLUNDERER (THE) .....	1	1
BORES (THE) .....	1	297
CITIZEN WHO APES THE NOBLEMAN (THE).....	3	193
COMIC PASTORAL (A).....	2	321
COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS (THE).....	3	395
DON GARCIA OF NAVARRE; OR, THE JEALOUS PRINCE	2	201
DON JUAN; OR, THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE .....	2	69
FLYING DOCTOR (THE).....	3	593
FORCED MARRIAGE (THE) .....	1	469
GEORGE DANDIN; OR, THE ABASHED HUSBAND.....	1	515

# GENERAL INDEX.

	VOL.	PAGE
IMAGINARY INVALID (THE) .....	3	483
IMPROMPTU OF VERSAILLES (THE) .....	1	433
JEALOUSY OF LE BARBOUILLE (THE).....	3	573
LEARNED LADIES (THE).....	3	421
LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR .....	2	135
LOVE-TIFF (THE).....	1	73
MAGNIFICENT LOVERS (THE) .....	3	139
MELICERTE .....	2	301
MISANTHROPE (THE) .....	2	171
MISER (THE) .....	3	1
MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC .....	3	83
PHYSICIAN IN SPITE OF HIMSELF (THE) .....	2	247
PRETENTIOUS YOUNG LADIES (THE) .....	1	133
PRINCESS OF ELIS (THE) .....	2	1
PSYCHE .....	3	277
ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN (THE).....	3	239
SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS (THE) .....	1	255
SCHOOL FOR WIVES CRITICISED (THE) .....	1	399
SCHOOL FOR WIVES (THE) .....	1	337
SCANARELLE; OR, THE SELF-DECEIVED HUSBAND ...	2	169
SICILIAN (THE); OR, LOVE MAKES THE PAINTER .....	2	333
TARTUFFE; OR, THE HYPOCRITE.....	2	361

L'AVARE.  
COMÉDIE.

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THE MISER.  
A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

*(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)*

9TH SEPT. 1668.





## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

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*The Miser* was first represented on the 9th of September 1668, and was played nine times, though not consecutively. Two months afterwards, it was performed again, after it had been represented at Court; and then it was acted eleven times. It was evidently not a success. And this is the more astonishing, because the murder of the *lieutenant criminel* Tardieu and of his wife—two noted misers, who had been assassinated in their own house three years before—was as yet not forgotten, and the author could therefore calculate upon a kind of curiosity to know how misers were represented on the stage, as well as on the intrinsic merit of the piece. Yet Molière's play is crowded with general traits, and not with particular allusions. He had to paint a vice as hateful in reality as it is disagreeable to be depicted on the stage; and he succeeded in doing this, whilst enlivening many scenes with the aid of funny characters or ridiculous incidents.

It has been said that *The Miser* did not succeed so well as Molière and his literary friends expected, because it was written in prose; but several of Molière's prose plays had already been represented in former years, and had met with great and deserved success. It has even been reported that Racine, who had quarrelled with Molière, remarked one day to Boileau that he was the only one who was laughing during a representation of *The Miser*, whereupon Boileau replied, "I have too high an opinion of you to believe that you were not laughing yourself, at least inwardly."

Molière's comedy is based on Plautus' *Aulularia*, of which we shall give an outline.<sup>1</sup>

"Euclio, a miserly old Athenian, has a daughter named Phædria, who has been ravished by a young man named Lyconides, but is ignorant from whom she has received injury. Lyconides has an uncle named Megadorus, who, being ignorant of these circumstances, determines to ask Phædra of her father in marriage for himself. Euclio has discovered a pot of gold in his house, which he watches with the greatest anxiety. In the meantime, Megadorus asks his daughter in marriage, and his proposal is accepted; and while preparations are making for the nuptials, Euclio conceals his treasure, first in one place and then in another. Strobilus, the servant of Lyconides, watches his movements, and, having discovered it, carries off the treasure. Whilst Euclio is lamenting his loss, Lyconides accosts him, with the view of confessing the outrage he has committed on

---

<sup>1</sup> Riley, *The Comedies of Plautus*, I., *Aulularia*, p. 374.

his daughter, and of announcing to him that his uncle, Megadorus, has cancelled his agreement to marry her in favour of himself. Euclio at first thinks that he is come to confess the robbery of the treasure. After much parleying, his mistake is rectified, and the matter is explained; on which Lyconides forces Strobilus to confess the theft; and (although the rest of the play in its original form is lost) we learn from acrostic argument that Strobilus gives up the treasure, and Lyconides marries the daughter of Euclio, and receives the gold for a marriage-portion. The Supplement, written by Codrus Urcens, supplies the place of what is lost."

Plautus' comedy has had many imitators before Molière. Lorenzino de Medici, the murderer of the first Duke of Florence, Alexander, worked up Terence's *Adelphi* with Plautus' *Aulularia*, and his *Mostellaria*, or, *the Haunted House*. and formed of the whole a comedy called the *Aridosio*, which was cleverly translated in French by Pierre de Larivey, in 1579, under the title of *The Spirits*. The miser Séverin believes his house infested by evil spirits, and therefore thinks it safer to hide a purse, containing two thousand crowns, in a hole outside. His anxiety is very amusing to know where to hide his money, and at last he cries out, "Good Heavens! it seems that everyone gazes at me; the very stones and wood look at me. He! my little hole, my darling, I recommend myself to you. Now then, in the name of Heaven and of Saint Anthony of Padua, *in manus tuas, domine, commendo spiritum meum.*" In spite of his pious invocation, Désiré, who wishes to be his son-in-law, and who had seen him hide the purse, steals it, but a long time elapses before the miser finds it out, and when at last the robbery is discovered, he breaks out in a rage. The miser's brother comes to tell him that his money is found again, but he does not believe it. Finally, his daughter is married to Désiré, and his son Urbain to Féliciane, a girl whom the latter had seduced, and whose father, a Protestant, comes expressly from La Rochelle, to give her a splendid dowry, and to be present at the wedding.

Although Molière owes several scenes to the Italian play of Lorenzino de Medici, he is more indebted to Plautus, from whom he borrowed the idea of making the miser his chief character. He also took some scenes from Ariosto's *I Suppositi* (*The Fictitious Characters*), and from several of the *commedia dell' arte*, such as *L' Amante tradito* (*The betrayed Lover*), *La Comeriera nobile* (*The noble-born Ladies-maid*), *Le Case svalgiate* (*The robbed House*), *Il dottor Bachettone* (*The bigoted Doctor*), and also one scene from *The Fair Female Plaintiff*, a comedy by Boissierot. *The Miser* is one of the comedies of Molière, which contains more imitations or reminiscences than any other of his plays; and yet his genius has so welded the whole that Goethe has declared that it possesses extraordinary grandeur, and is in a high degree tragical. This is chiefly because Molière clearly brings out the consequences of extreme avarice, which is, that all family ties are thereby destroyed, all human feelings eradicated, and all natural affections effectually rooted up. Horace had already observed this in his Eighth Satire; but Molière develops it with great force and energy, and shows how the miser cares only for his money, and considers his children as his enemies, how the son takes up loans at any price, and how the daughter has an intrigue with her lover, disguised as a steward.

J. J. Rousseau considered that though it is wrong to be a miser, and to lend money at an usurious interest, yet it is more wrong for a son to rob his father, to be wanting in respect to him, and, when his father gives him his malediction, to reply, "I want none of your gifts." The critic ap-

appears to have forgotten that Molière's duty as a dramatist was to exemplify the consequences of vice, and to show to the spectators that a miserly father must produce a spendthrift son, and that a parent who neglects all his duties will be punished by the insolence and want of feeling displayed by the very children whom he has neglected.

Molière's miser moves in rather a fashionable sphere; he has horses, a carriage, several servants, and even a steward. Of course, his position in society compels him to keep them, and therefore the contrast is all the stronger between the pangs caused by his avarice, and the necessity which obliges him to keep up a certain appearance. He has horses, but they starve; servants who are neither clothed nor dressed; a steward whom he does not pay, and who seems a meaner fellow than he is himself. He wishes to give an entertainment; but it must cost him nothing, just as he desires his daughter to be married, without giving her a dowry. His falling in love—and of course even misers can feel an inferior sort of love—deepens only the more the traits of his avarice, and in the end he prefers *les beaux yeux de sa cassette* to those of the object of his affections.

There exists a Chinese comedy, called *Khanthian-non* (*The Slave of the rich which he guards*), which depicts a miser from his earliest youth until his death. His end, above all, is characteristic. His son has bought for the sick man twopence-halfpenny's worth pease-pudding, instead of one farthing's worth, as his father had told him. The dying man observes the sum which his son has disbursed, which makes him very uneasy; and when, finally, he is at his last gasp, he advises his son to bury him for economy's sake in an old horse-trough which is behind the house; to cut him in two if his body should be too long; and, above all, because his bones are rather hard, not to use his own axe, but to borrow his neighbour's. This is a frightful example of "the ruling passion strong in death."

In the first volume of the translation of "Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732," this play is dedicated to his Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, in the following words:—

SIR,

The Refin'd Taste you are so well known to have in the Publick Diversions, and the peculiar Encouragement, which You have given to Theatrical Entertainments, have embolden'd the Translators of the following Work to implore Your Favour and Protection.

It is intended, SIR, to publish all the Comedies of *Molière* in the same manner in which the *Miser* now appears to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS: and tho' we are very sensible that it cannot be of the least Advantage to Your better understanding of the Original Author, yet, as it may prove very serviceable to our present Dramatick Writers, and assist 'em in producing Entertainments more agreeable to Nature, Good Sense, and Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's Taste, we humbly hope that you will not look on it as an useless undertaking.

It may be thought perhaps a malicious, an ill-grounded Suggestion, to insinuate that those amongst us, who presume to write for the Stage, are either unacquainted with *Molière*, or ignorant of his Language; but I fear Your ROYAL HIGHNESS has too frequently experienced the one, and from thence very naturally concluded the other. The present Productions of the Theatre are most of 'em such crude unmeaning Rhapsodies, so foreign to Truth, Virtue, and Politeness, and so void of all the rules both of Poetry and Grammar, that the authors of 'em may justly be suspected of Ignorance in the living Languages as well as in the Dead. But Your ROYAL HIGHNESS wants no more to be informed of their Defects, than of *Molière's* Perfections; as You know how to taste and enjoy the one, so You as readily can see thro', and condemn the others, tho' You are led, by the abundance of Your Candour and Good-nature, not entirely to reject 'em. *Molière*, SIR, has been translated into most of the Languages, and patroniz'd by most of the Princes in *Europe*; but if we have been capable of doing him as much Justice in our *Version*, as we have been prudent enough to do him in the choice of a *Patron*, he'll

be more happy in speaking *English* than in all the rest; and we shall be esteemed as good Guardians of *Molière's* Fatherless Muse, as we really are, SIR, *Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's* most obedient and most devoted humble Servants,

THE TRANSLATORS."

Several English dramatists have partly borrowed from Molière. The first was Mr. Shadwell, who added above eight new characters to the French play, called it also *The Miser*, and had it acted at the Theatre Royal in 1671. In the Preface he states:—

"The foundation of this play I took from one of Molière's, called *L'Avare*; but that having too few persons, and too little action for an English theatre, I added to both so much, that I may call more than half of this play my own; and I think I may say without vanity, that Molière's part of it has not suffered at my hands; nor did I ever know a French comedy made use of by the worst of our Poets, that was not bettered by them. It is not barrenness of wit or invention, that makes us borrow from the French, but Laziness; and this was the occasion of my making use of *L'Avare* . . . The great haste I made in writing made me very doubtful of the success of it, which was the reason that at first I did not own it, but concealed my name."

But Shadwell is not satisfied with this, and in the Prologue says:—

"French plays, in which true wit's as rarely found,  
As mines of silver are on English ground . . .  
But stay, I've been too bold; methinks I see  
The English Monsieurs rise in mutiny,  
Crying, Confound him! does he damn French plays,  
The only pieces that deserve the Bays?  
France, that on Fashion does strict laws impose,  
The universal monarchy for clothes,  
That rules our most important part, our dress,  
Should rule our wit, which is a thing much less.  
But, Messieurs, he says, farther to provoke ye,  
He would as soon be author of *Tu Quoque*  
As any farce that e'er from France was sent . . .  
For our good-natured nation thinks it fit  
To count French toys, good wares; French nonsense, wit."

I can understand the bitterness of the burly old Whig dramatist against France. I can even find an excuse for his not understanding French wit,—for the plea may be brought forward of a want of appreciation by dispensation of Providence,—but surely it is too much to say what he states in the Preface, that the worst English poets better every French comedy which they use. His lofty idea of his own and his professional brethren's dramatic capacities, and their pretended independence of French wit, whilst, at the same time, they pilfer the grandest conceptions, as well as the smallest trifles, of Gallic dramatists, has come down to a much later time, and is perhaps not unknown even in the present day.

Voltaire remarks on Shadwell's preface, "that if a man has not wit enough to conceal his vanity better, he has not wit enough to do better than Molière."

Fielding's play, *The Miser*, professedly taken from Plautus and Molière, was acted at Drury Lane Theatre on the 17th of February, 1733. It was dedicated to Charles, duke of Richmond and Lennox, and in the Preface he speaks of dedicating Molière to his Grace, and calls himself a translator. In the prologue it is said:—

"To-night our Author treats you with Molière,  
 Molière, who nature's inmost secrets knew;  
 Whose potent pen, like Kneller's pencil, drew.  
 In whose strong scenes all characters are shewn,  
 Not by low jests, but actions of their own.  
 Happy our English bard, if your applause  
 Grant has not injur'd the French author's cause.  
 From that alone arises all his fear:  
 He must be safe, if he has saved Molière."

This is very discriminating praise of Molière's play. In all the scenes which Fielding has imitated from Molière, he has nearly literally followed him. The chief difference is that, in Fielding's play, the servant man and maid have more scenes allotted to them than in the French comedy; that the maid, Lappet, in connivance with Mariana, succeeds in getting a bond of ten thousand pounds from Lovegold, the miser, to be forfeited, in case he should refuse to marry the young lady: that the latter frightens him, by giving the most extravagant orders to different tradesmen, who make their appearance, and by ordering a repast on a most elaborate scale; that, finally, Lovegold endeavours to bribe Lappet to swear a robbery against Mariana, who, like a regular English girl, has far more spirit, and is far more active—I would nearly have said is more intriguing—than her French prototype. It has been justly said of Fielding's *Miser* that "it has the value of a copy from a great painter by an eminent hand."

*The Miser* has been translated by Michael de Boissy, 1752, but it has never been performed.

Mr. Edward Tighe also made of *The Miser* a farce in one act, whilst James Wild, prompter at Covent Garden Theatre, reduced it to three acts, and had it played in the year 1792.

In 1856, Engelbertus Saegelken published at Bremen the thesis, *De Mollerii Fabulâ Avari*, which he defended for his degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and which was dedicated to the Rector of the University of that town. His object is to find out and examine in how far Molière has followed Plautus' *Aulularia*; the points of resemblance and of difference between Euclio and Harpagon. He compares the first Scene of the first Act and the fourth Scene of the fourth Act of Plautus' comedy with the third Scene of the first Act and the same Scene of the third Act of Molière's *Miser*; states that the Latin dramatist holds to the unities, but not the French one, and discusses Schlegel's dictum that Molière has brought all the genuine features of avarice into one man—as if the miser who buried his treasure in the ground was of the same kind as he who makes money by usury. Saegelken thinks this is not a fair indictment against Molière, and concludes by giving the opinions of some learned critics.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HARPAGON, *father to Cléante and Elise, in love with Mariane.*<sup>2</sup>

CLÉANTE, *Harpagon's son, Mariane's lover.*

VALÈRE, *son of Anselme, Elise's lover.*

ANSELME, *father to Valère and Mariane.*

MASTER SIMON, *agent.*

MASTER JACQUES, *cook and coachman to Harpagon.*

LA FLÈCHE, *Cléante's valet.*

BRINDAVOINE, } *Harpagon's lacqueys.*<sup>3</sup>  
LA MERLUCHE, }

A MAGISTRATE<sup>4</sup> *and his CLERK.*

ELISE, *Harpagon's daughter, Valère's sweetheart.*

MARIANE, *Cléante's sweetheart, beloved by Harpagon.*

FROSINE, *a designing woman.*

MISTRESS CLAUDE, *Harpagon's servant.*

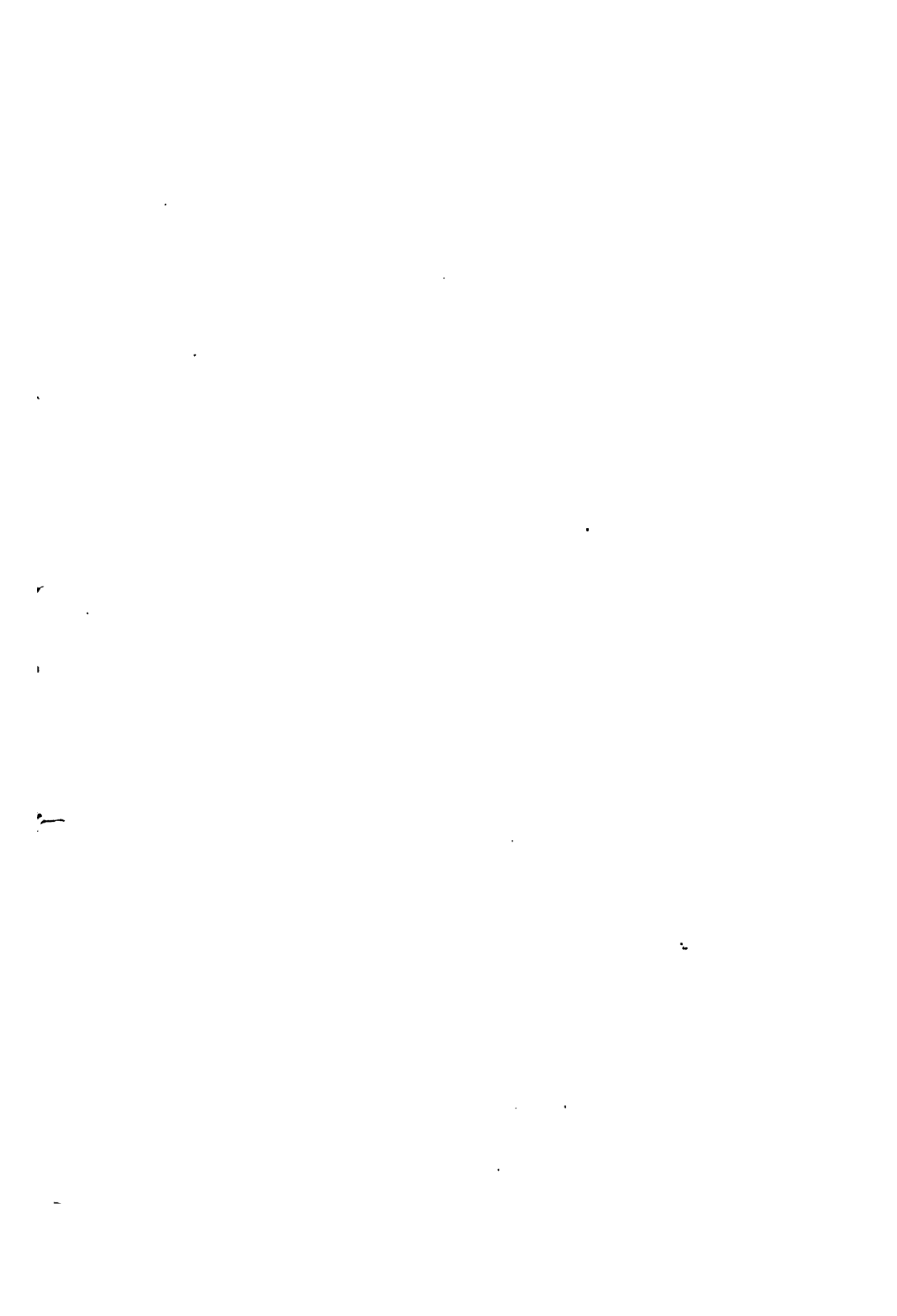
*The scene is in PARIS, in HARPAGON'S HOUSE.*

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<sup>2</sup> This part was played by Molière himself. His dress was a cloak, breeches and doublet of black satin, ornamented with coarse black silk lace, hat, wig, and shoes. *Harpagon* is derived, according to some commentators, from the Latin *harpago*, a hook, itself formed from a Greek word; hence a man with crooked fingers, to which everything sticks; the Latin word is twice used in the *Aulularia*. Luigi Grotto, the author of *Emilia* (see Introductory Notice to *The Blunderer*, Vol. I., page 3), had already given the name to a miser. But may the word *Harpagon* not be connected with *harpon*, a harpoon, and *harper*, to seize with the nails, from the old high German *harfan*, to seize?

<sup>3</sup> *Brindavoine* means literally "oat-stalk," and *la Merluche* "stock-fish;" both lacqueys being probably so named on account of their emaciated appearance.

<sup>4</sup> The original has *Commissaire*, see Vol. I., *The School for Husbands*, page 261, note 5.





# THE MISER.

(*L'AVARE*).

---

## ACT I.

SCENE I.—VALÈRE, ELISE.

VAL. Eh, what! charming Elise, you are growing melancholy, after the kind assurances which you were good enough to give me of your love! Alas! I see you sighing in the midst of my joy! Tell me, is it with regret at having made me happy? And do you repent of that engagement to which my affection has induced you?<sup>5</sup>

EL. No Valère, I cannot repent of anything that I do for you. I feel myself attracted to it by too sweet a power, and I have not even the will to wish that things were otherwise. But, to tell you the truth, our success causes me uneasiness; and I am very much afraid of loving you a little more than I ought.

VAL. Eh! what is there to fear, Elise, in the affection you have for me?

EL. Alas! a hundred things at once: the anger of a father, the reproaches of my family, the censure of the world; but more than all, Valère, the change of your heart, and that criminal coolness with which those of your sex most frequently repay the too ardent proofs of an innocent love.

---

<sup>5</sup> The engagement Valère mentions is a reciprocal marriage promise, signed by himself and Elise only the day before; hence his joy. He explains this fully, Act v., Scene 3.

VAL. Ah! do not wrong me thus, to judge of me by others! Suspect me of anything Elise, rather than of failing in my duty to you, I love you too well for that: and my affection for you will last as long as my life.

EL. Ah, Valère, every one talks in the same strain! All men are alike in their words; their actions only show them to be different.

VAL. Since actions only can show what we are, wait then, at least, to judge of my heart by them; and do not search for crimes because you unjustly fear, and wrongly anticipate. Pray do not kill me with the poignant blows of an outrageous suspicion; and give me time to convince you, by many thousand proofs, of the sincerity of my affection.

EL. Alas, how easily we are persuaded by those we love! Yes, Valère, I hold your heart incapable of deceiving me. I believe that you truly love me, and that you will be constant. I will no longer doubt of it, and I will confine my grief to the apprehensions of the blame which people may utter against me.

VAL. But why this uneasiness?

EL. I should have nothing to fear, if every one could see you with the eyes with which I look upon you; and in your own person I see sufficient to justify me in what I do for you. For its defence, my heart pleads all your merit, supported by the help of a gratitude with which Heaven has bound me to you. At every moment I call to mind that supreme danger which first made us acquainted with each other; that wonderful generosity which made you risk your life in order to snatch mine from the fury of the waves; those most tender attentions which you lavished upon me, after having dragged me out of the water, and the assiduous homage of that ardent affection, which neither time nor obstacles have been able to discourage, and which, causing you to neglect relatives and country, detains you in this spot, and keeps your position unrecognized all on my account, and has reduced you to assume the functions of servant<sup>6</sup> to my father, in

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<sup>6</sup> The original has *domestique*, which at that time meant simply "belonging to the house of;" and was not considered humiliating.

order to see me. All this produces, no doubt, a marvellous effect on me, and quite sufficient to justify, in my own eyes, the engagement to which I have consented; but it is not perhaps enough to justify it in that of others, and I am not certain that the world will enter into my sentiments.

VAL. Of all that you have mentioned, it is only by my love that I pretended to deserve anything from you; and as for the scruples which you have; your father himself takes but too good care to justify you before the world; and the excess of his avarice, and the austere way in which he treats his children, might authorize stranger things still. Pardon me, charming Elise, for speaking thus before you. You know that, on that subject, no good can be said. But in short, if I can, as I hope I shall, find my relatives again, we shall have very little difficulty in rendering them favourable to us. I am impatient to receive some tidings of them; and should they be delayed much longer, I will myself go in search of them.

EL. Ah! Valère, do not stir from this, I beseech you; and think only how to ingratiate yourself with my father.

VAL. You see how I go about it, and the artful wheedling which I have been obliged to make use of to enter his service; beneath what mask of sympathy and affinity of sentiments I disguise myself, in order to please him; and what part I daily play with him, that I may gain his affection. I am making admirable progress in it; and experience teaches me that to find favour with men, there is no better method than to invest ourselves in their eyes with their hobbies; than to act according to their maxims, to flatter their faults and to applaud their doings. One needs not fear to overdo this complaisance; the way in which one fools them may be as palpable as possible; even the sharpest are the greatest dupes when flattery is in the question; and there is nothing too impertinent or too ridiculous for them to swallow, if it be only seasoned with praises. Sincerity suffers somewhat by the trade which I follow; but, when we have need of people, we must suit ourselves to their tastes; and since they are to be gained

over only in that way, it is not the fault of those who flatter, but of those who wish to be flattered?'

EL. But why do you not try to gain the support of my brother, in case the servant should take it into her head to reveal our secret?

VAL. There is no managing them both at once; and the disposition of the father and that of the son are so opposed to each other, that it becomes difficult to arrange a confidence with both. But you, on your part, act upon your brother, and make use of the affection between you two, to bring him over to our interests. He is just coming. I go. Take this opportunity of speaking to him, and reveal our business to him, only when you judge the fit time come.

EL. I do not know whether I shall have the courage to entrust this confidence to him.

SCENE II.—CLÉANTE, ELISE.

CLE. I am very glad to find you alone, sister; I was dying to speak to you, to unburden myself to you of a secret.

EL. You find me quite ready to listen, brother. What have you to tell me?

CLE. Many things, sister, all contained in one word. I am in love.

EL. You are in love?

CLE. Yes, I am in love. But before going farther, I know that I am dependent on my father, and that the name of son subjects me to his will; that we ought not to pledge our affection without the consent of those to whom we owe our life; that Heaven has made them the masters of our affection, and that we are enjoined not to dispose of it but by their direction; that, not being biassed by any foolish passion, they are less likely to deceive themselves than we are, and to see much better what is proper for us; that we ought rather to be guided by the light of their prudence than by the blindness of our passion; and that the ardour of our youth often drags us to dangerous precipices. I tell you all this, sister, that you may save yourself the trouble

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<sup>1</sup> M. Génin has observed that this part of Valère's speech is written in blank verse.

of telling it to me; for, in short, my love will not listen to anything, and I pray you not to make any remonstrances.

EL. Have you pledged yourself, brother, with her whom you love?

CLE. No; but I am determined to do so, and I implore you, once more, not to advance any reasons to dissuade me from it.

EL. Am I then so strange a person, brother?

CLE. No, sister; but you are not in love; you are ignorant of the sweet empire which a tender passion exercises over our hearts; and I dread your wisdom.

EL. Alas! dear brother, let us not speak of my wisdom; there is no one who does not fail in it, at least once in his life; and were I to open my heart to you, perhaps I would appear less wise in your eyes than yourself.

CLE. Ah! would to Heaven that your heart, like mine

EL. Let us first finish your affair, and tell me who it is whom you love.

CLE. A young person, who has lately come to live in this neighbourhood, and who seems to be made to inspire love in all who behold her. Nature, sister, has created nothing more amiable; and I felt myself carried away the moment I saw her. Her name is Mariane, and she lives under the protection of a good motherly woman who is nearly always ill, and for whom this dear girl entertains feelings of friendship not to be imagined. She waits upon her, condoles with her, and cheers her with a tenderness that would touch you to the very soul. She does things with the most charming air in the world; a thousand graces shine through her every action, a gentleness full of attraction, a most prepossessing kindness, an adorable simplicity, a . . . Ah! sister, I wish you could have seen her!<sup>8</sup>

EL. I see much, brother, in the things you tell me; and to understand what she really is, it is sufficient that you love her.

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<sup>8</sup> Auger, one of the commentators of Molière, makes the just remark, that the love of Cléante for Mariane is not only based upon her personal attractions, but upon her kindness, her simplicity, her gentleness. So in *The Rogueries of Scapin*, Molière, following the Roman dramatist Terence, makes Octave fall in love with Hyacinthe, when he sees her shedding tears at the death of her mother.

CLE. I have learned, secretly, that they are not too well off; and that even their careful way of living has some difficulty in making both ends meet with the small means at their command. Imagine, dear sister, the pleasure it must be to improve the condition of her whom we love; to convey delicately, some small assistance to the modest wants of a virtuous family; and then conceive how annoying it is to me to find myself, through the avarice of a father, powerless to taste that joy, and to be unable to show this fair one any proof of my love.

EL. Yes, I can conceive well enough, brother, what must be your grief.

CLE. Ah! sister, it is greater than you can believe. For, in short, can anything be more cruel than this rigorous meanness that is exercised over us, this strange niggardliness in which we are made to languish? What good will it do us to have means, when we shall no longer be of an age to enjoy them, and if, to maintain myself, I am now obliged to run in debt on all sides; if I, as well as you, am obliged to crave daily the aid of tradesmen in order to wear decent clothes? In short, I wished to speak to you to help me to sound my father upon my present feelings; and should I find him opposed to them, I am resolved to go elsewhere, with this dear girl, to enjoy whatever fortune providence may have in store for us. I have endeavoured to raise money everywhere for this purpose, and if your affairs, sister, are similar to mine, and if our father runs counter to our wishes, we shall both leave him, and emancipate ourselves from that tyranny in which his insupportable avarice has so long held us.

EL. It is true enough that every day he gives us more cause to regret the death of our mother, and that . . .

CLE. I hear his voice; let us go a little farther to finish our confidences; and afterwards we will join our forces to attack the ruggedness of his temper.

### SCENE III.—HARPAGON, LA FLÈCHE.

HAR. Clear out of this immediately, and let me have no reply! Get away out of my house, you consummate cheat, you true gallow's bird!

LA FL. (*Aside*). I have never seen anything more

vicious than this cursed old man ; and I really think—I speak under correction—that he has got the devil in him.

HAR. You are muttering between your teeth !

LA FL. Why are you sending me away ?

HAR. It well becomes you, you hang-dog, to ask me my reasons. Out with you, quickly that I may not knock you down.

LA FL. What have I done to you ?

HAR. You have done so much to me that I wish you to get out.

LA FL. Your son, my master, has ordered me to wait.

HAR. Go and wait for him in the street, then ; but do not remain in my house, planted bolt upright as a sentry, taking notice of everything that goes on, and making the best use of it. I will not have a spy of my concerns eternally before my eyes, a wretch, whose cursed eyes watch every one of my actions, covet all I have, and ferret about everywhere to see if there is nothing to pilfer.\*

LA FL. How the deuce could one manage to rob you ? Are you a likely man to have aught stolen from you, when you lock up everything, and keep guard day and night ?

HAR. I shall lock up whatever I think fit, and keep guard as long as I please. A nice pass it has come to with these spies, who take notice of everything one does. (*Softly, aside*). I quake for fear he should suspect something about my money. (*Aloud*). Ah ! are you not just the fellow who would think nothing of bruiting the tale about that I have money hidden in my house ?

LA FL. You have money hidden ?

HAR. No, you scoundrel, I do not say that. (*To himself*). I am bursting with rage. (*Aloud*). I ask whether you would not from sheer malice, bruit the story about that I have some.

LA FL. Eh ! what does it matter to us whether you have any or not, as long as it comes to the same thing to us ?

HAR. (*Lifting up his hand, to slap La Flèche's face*). You are arguing the matter ! I will give you something for this reasoning on your ears. Once more, get out of this.

\* This is imitated from the first scene of the first act of Plautus' *Aulularia*, where Euclio, the miser, drives out the female slave, Staphyla.

LA FL. Very well ! I am going.

HAR. Wait : you are not taking anything away with you ?

LA FL. What should I take from you ?

HAR. I do not know until I look. Show me your hands ?

LA FL. Here they are.

HAR. The others.<sup>10</sup>

LA FL. The others ?

HAR. Yes.

LA FL. Here they are.

HAR. (*Pointing to the breeches of La Flèche*). Have you put nothing in there ?

LA FL. Look for yourself !

HAR. (*Feeling the outside of La Flèche's pockets*). Those wide breeches are just fit to become receivers for things purloined, and I wish one of them had been hanged at the gallows.

LA FL. (*Aside*). Ah, how a man like this well deserves the thing he fears ! and how much pleasure I would have in robbing him !

HAR. Eh ?

LA FL. What ?

HAR. What are you muttering about robbing !

LA FL. I am saying that you feel carefully everywhere to see if I have robbed you.

HAR. That is what I mean to do. (*Harpagon fumbles in La Flèche's pockets*).

LA FL. (*Aside*). May the plague take avarice and all avaricious people !

HAR. What ! what are you saying ?

LA FL. What am I saying ?

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<sup>10</sup> This is again imitated from Plautus' *Aulularia* (Act iv., Scene 3), when Euclio asks Strobilus, the servant of Lyconides, whom he suspects of having robbed him, to show him his third hand. Chappuzeau, in the comedy of the *Riche Vilain*, printed in 1663, has also borrowed this trait from Plautus ; but he makes the servant Philipin reply to the miser, "Have I a dozen of hands ?" In Tomkis' play *Albumazar the Astrologer* (Act iii., Scene 8), performed in 1616 at Trinity College, Cambridge, and an imitation of an Italian Comedy by Porta, Ronca answers Trinculo, who questions him in a similar manner, "Think you me the giant with an hundred hands ?"



HAR. Yes ; what are you saying about avarice and avaricious people ?

LA FL. I say may the plague take avarice and all avaricious people.

HAR. To whom are you alluding ?

LA FL. To avaricious people.

HAR. And who are they, these avaricious people ?

LA FL. Villains and curmudgeons.

HAR. But whom do you mean by that ?

LA FL. What are you troubling yourself about ?

HAR. I am troubling myself about what concerns me.

LA FL. Do you think that I am speaking of you ?

HAR. I think what I think ; but I wish you to tell me to whom you are addressing yourself when you say that.

LA FL. I am addressing myself . . . I am addressing myself to my cap.

HAR. And I might address myself to the head that is in it.<sup>11</sup>

LA FL. Will you prevent me from cursing avaricious people ?

HAR. No ; but I will prevent you from jabbering, and from being insolent. Hold your tongue !

LA FL. I name no one.

HAR. I shall thrash you if you say another word.

LA FL. Whom the cap fits, let him wear it.<sup>12</sup>

HAR. Will you hold your tongue ?

LA FL. Yes, against my will.

HAR. Ah ! Ah !

LA FL. (*Showing Harpagon a pocket in his doublet*). Just look, there is another pocket ; are you satisfied ?

HAR. Come, you had better give it up without my searching you.

LA FL. What ?

HAR. What you have taken from me.

LA FL. I have taken nothing at all from you.

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<sup>11</sup> The original has, "*Je pourrais bien parler à ta barrette.*" In the Middle Ages, the front of the hood was called *barrette*, on account of the different ornaments which formed bars there. Hence *parler à la barrette* was a familiar term for scolding, and even for striking one.

<sup>12</sup> The original has "*Qui se sent morveux, qu'il se mouche,*" "He that has a cold, let him blow his nose."

HAR. Assuredly?

LA FL. Assuredly.

HAR. Good-bye, then, and go to the devil.

LA FL. (*Aside*). That is a pretty dismissal.<sup>13</sup>

HAR. I leave you to your own conscience, at least.

SCENE IV.—HARPAGON, *alone*.

There is a hang-dog of a valet who is very much in my way; I do not at all care to see this limping cur about the place.<sup>14</sup> It is certainly no small trouble to keep such a large sum of money in one's house; and he is a happy man who has all his well laid out at interest, and keeps only so much by him as is necessary for his expenses. One is not a little puzzled to contrive, in the whole house, a safe hiding-place; for, as far as I am concerned, I distrust safes, and would never rely on them. I look upon them just as a distinct bait to burglars; for it is always the first thing which they attack.

SCENE V.—HARPAGON; ELISE and CLÉANTE *conversing together at the farther end of the stage*.

HAR. (*Still thinking himself alone*). For all that, I am not quite sure if I have done right in burying in my garden these ten thousand crowns, which were paid to me yesterday. Ten thousand golden crowns in one's house is a sum sufficient. . . . (*Aside, perceiving Elise and Cléante*). Oh, Heavens! I have betrayed myself! The excitement has carried me too far, and I verily believe I have spoken loud, while arguing to myself. (*To Cléante and Elise*). What is the matter?

CLE. Nothing, father?

HAR. Have you been there long?

EL. We were just coming in.

HAR. You have heard . . .

CLE. What, father?

<sup>13</sup> This is again borrowed from the *Aulularia* (Act iv., Scene 3).

<sup>14</sup> I have already observed that Molière (see *The Love Tiff*, Vol. I., page 79, note 1, took advantage even of the physical defects of the members of his troupe, in writing parts for them; hence the allusion to the lameness of Béjart, his brother-in-law. For Béjart, see Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.

HAR. There . . .

EL. What?

HAR. What I said just now.

CLE. No.

HAR. Yes, you have.

EL. I beg your pardon.

HAR. I see well enough that you overheard some words. I was talking to myself about the difficulty one experiences now-a-days in finding money, and I was saying how pleasant it must be to have ten thousand crowns in the house.

CLE. We hesitated to speak to you, for fear of interrupting you.

HAR. I am very glad to tell you this, so that you may not take things the wrong way, and I imagine that I said that I myself had ten thousand crowns.

CLE. We have no wish to enter into your concerns.

HAR. Would to Heaven that I had them, ten thousand crowns!

CLE. I do not think . . .

HAR. It would be a capital affair for me.

EL. These are things . . .

HAR. I am greatly in need of them.

CLE. I think . . .

HAR. That would suit me very well.

EL. You are . . .

HAR. And I should not have to complain as I do now, about the hard times.

CLE. Good Heavens! father, you have no need to complain, and we know that you have wealth enough.

HAR. How! I wealth enough! Those who say so surely tell a lie. Nothing could be more false; and they are but a pack of rascals who spread all these reports about.

EL. Do not put yourself in a rage.

HAR. A strange thing, that my own children should betray me, and become my enemies.

CLE. Is it becoming your enemy to say that you have wealth?

HAR. Yes. Such talk, and the expenses you indulge in will be the cause that one of these fine days people will

come and cut my throat, in my own house, in the belief that I am stuffed with gold pieces.<sup>15</sup>

CLE. What great expenses do I indulge in?

HAR. Expenses? Can anything be more scandalous, than this sumptuous attire, which you exhibit about the town? I scolded your sister yesterday; but this is much worse. This cries aloud to Heaven for vengeance; for, take you from top to toe, there is enough to ensure a handsome competency.<sup>16</sup> I have told you twenty times, son, that all your manners displease me; you are furiously aping the aristocracy; and to go dressed as you do, you must rob me.

CLE. Eh! how rob you?

HAR. How do I know? Where can you get the means of keeping up such an appearance?

CLE. I, father? it is because I play; and, as I am very lucky, I put my winnings on my back.

HAR. That is very bad. If you are lucky at play, you should profit by it, and lay out the money you win at decent interest, that you may provide for a rainy day.<sup>17</sup> I should much like to know, leaving all other things aside, what the good can be of all these ribbons with which you are decked out from head to foot, and if half-a-dozen tacks are not sufficient to fasten your breeches. Is it at all necessary to spend money upon wigs? when one can wear hair of home growth, which costs nothing! I would bet that your wig and ribbons cost far more than twenty pistoles, and twenty pistoles, at a little more than eight per cent. bring in eighteen livres, six pence, and eight groats a year.<sup>18</sup>

CLE. You are perfectly right.

HAR. Let us leave the subject, and talk of other things.

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<sup>15</sup> The original has *cousu de pistoles*. See *The Blunderer*, Vol. I., page II, note 7.

<sup>16</sup> In the original, *une bonne constitution*. The *constitution* was a contract by which he who borrowed money promised to pay a certain sum every year to the lender.

<sup>17</sup> Harpagon does not blame Cléante for gambling, so long as the latter wins; he simply regrets that his son does not make better use of his gains.

<sup>18</sup> The original for "a little more than eight per cent." is *au denier douze*, but the legal interest was, at the time Molière wrote *The Miser*, five per cent. Harpagon speaks also of *sous*, and *deniers*.

(*Perceiving that Cléante and Elise interchange glances.*)  
Eh! (*Softly, aside.*) I believe that they are making signs to each other to rob me of my purse. (*Aloud.*) What mean those gestures?

EL. My brother and I are arguing who shall speak first.

• We have each something to say to you.

HAR. And I have something to say to you both.

CLE. It is about marriage that we wish to speak to you, father.

HAR. And it is also about marriage that I wish to converse with you.

EL. Ah, father!

HAR. Why this cry? Is it the word, or the thing itself that frightens you, daughter?

CLE. The way you may look at marriage may frighten us both; and we fear that your sentiments may not happen to chime in with our choice.

HAR. A little patience; do not alarm yourselves. I know what is good for you both, and neither the one nor the other shall have cause to complain of what I intend to do. To begin at one end of the story (*To Cléante*), tell me, have you noticed a young person, called Mariane, who lodges not far from here?

CLE. Yes, father.

HAR. And you?

EL. I have heard her spoken of.

HAR. How do you like that girl, son?

CLE. A very charming person.

HAR. What do you think of her countenance?

CLE. Very genteel, and full of intelligence.

HAR. Her air and manner?

CLE. Without doubt, admirable.

HAR. Do you not think that a girl like that deserves to be taken notice of?

CLE. Yes, father.

HAR. That it would be a desirable match?

CLE. Very desirable.

HAR. That she looks as if she would make a good wife?

CLE. Undoubtedly.

HAR. And that a husband would have reason to be satisfied with her?

CLE. Assuredly.

HAR. There is a slight difficulty. I fear that she has not as much money as one might reasonably pretend to.

CLE. Ah ! father, money is not worth considering when there is a question of marrying a respectable girl.

HAR. Not so, not so. But this much may be said, that if one finds not quite so much money as one might wish, there is a way of regaining it in other things.

CLE. Of course.

HAR. Well, I am very glad to see that you share my sentiments ; for her genteel behaviour and her gentleness have quite gained my heart, and I have made up my mind to marry her, provided she has some dowry.

CLE. Eh !

HAR. What now ?

CLE. You have made up your mind, you say . . .

HAR. To marry Mariane.

CLE. Who ? You, you ?

HAR. Yes, I, I, I. What means this ?

CLE. I feel a sudden giddiness, and I had better go.

HAR. It will be nothing. Go quickly into the kitchen, and drink a large glassful of cold water.

#### SCENE VI.—HARPAGON, ELISE.

HAR. A lot of flimsy sparks, with no more strength than chickens. Daughter, this is what I have resolved upon for myself. As for your brother, I intend him for a certain widow, of whom they spoke to me this morning ; and you, I will give you to Mr. Anselme.

EL. To Mr. Anselme ?

HAR. Yes, a staid, prudent, and careful man, who is not above fifty, and whose wealth is spoken of everywhere.

EL. (*Making a curtsey*). I have no wish to get married, father, if you please.

HAR. (*Imitating her*). And I, my dear girl, my pet, I wish you to get married, if you please.

EL. (*Curtseying once more*). I beg your pardon, father.

HAR. (*Imitating Elise*). I beg your pardon, daughter.

EL. I am Mr. Anselme's most humble servant

(*curtseying again*); but, with your leave, I shall not marry him.

HAR. I am your most humble slave, but, (*imitating Elise*) with your leave, you shall marry him not later than this evening.

EL. Not later than this evening?

HAR. Not later than this evening.

EL. (*Curtseying again*). That shall not be, father.

HAR. (*Imitating her again*). This shall be, daughter.

EL. No.

HAR. Yes.

EL. No, I tell you.

HAR. Yes, I tell you.

EL. That is a thing you shall not drive me to.

HAR. That is a thing I shall drive you to.

EL. I will sooner kill myself than marry such a husband.

HAR. You shall not kill yourself, and you shall marry him. But has such boldness ever been seen! Has ever a daughter been heard to speak to her father in this manner?

EL. But has any one ever seen a father give away his daughter in marriage in this manner?

HAR. It is a match to which no one can object; and I bet that every one will approve of my choice.

EL. And I bet that no reasonable being will approve of it.

HAR. (*Perceiving Valère in the distance*). Here comes Valère. Shall we make him judge betwixt us in this matter?

EL. I consent to it.

HAR. Will you submit to his judgment?

EL. Yes; I will submit to what he shall decide.

HAR. That is agreed.

SCENE VII.—VALÈRE, HARPAGON, ELISE.

HAR. Come here, Valère. We have elected you to tell us who is in the right, my daughter or I.

VAL. You, Sir, beyond gainsay.

HAR. Are you aware of what we are talking?

VAL. No. But you could not be in the wrong. You are made up of right.

HAR. I intend, this evening, to give her for a husband, a man who is as rich as he is discreet; and the jade tells me to my face that she will not take him. What say you to this?

VAL. What do I say to it?

HAR. Yes.

VAL. Eh! eh!

HAR. What?

VAL. I say, that in the main, I am of your opinion; and you cannot but be right. But on the other side, she is not altogether wrong, and . . .

HAR. How is that? Mr. Anselme is a desirable match; he is a gentleman who is noble,<sup>19</sup> kind, steady, discreet, and very well to do, and who has neither chick nor child left him from his first marriage. Could she meet with a better match?

VAL. That is true. But she might say to you that it is hurrying things a little too much, and that you should give her some time at least to see whether her inclinations would agree with . . .

HAR. This is an opportunity which should be taken by the forelock. I find in this marriage an advantage which I could not find elsewhere; and he agrees to take her without a dowry.

VAL. Without a dowry?

HAR. Yes.

VAL. In that case, I say no more. Do you see, this is altogether a convincing reason; one must yield to that.

HAR. It is a considerable saving to me.

VAL. Assuredly; it cannot be gainsaid. It is true that your daughter might represent to you that marriage is a more important matter than you think; that it involves a question of being happy or miserable all one's life; and that an engagement which must last till death ought never to be entered upon except with great precautions.

HAR. Without a dowry!

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<sup>19</sup> This is a hit at the men who pretended to be of noble birth and were not so. Molière repeats this attack in the fifth Scene of the fifth Act, page 77.



VAL. You are right. That decides it all, of course. There are people who might tell you that on such an occasion the wishes of a daughter are something, no doubt, that ought to be taken into consideration; and that this great disparity of age, of temper, and of feelings makes a marriage subject to very sad accidents.

HAR. Without a dowry!

VAL. Ah! there is no reply to that; I know that well enough. Who the deuce could say anything against that? Not that there are not many fathers who would prefer to humour the wishes of their daughters to the money they could give them; who would not sacrifice them to their own interests, and who would, above all things, try to infuse into marriage that sweet conformity, which, at all times, maintains honour, peace, and joy; and which . . .

HAR. Without a dowry!<sup>20</sup>

VAL. It is true; that closes one's mouth at once. Without a dowry! There are no means of resisting an argument like that.

HAR. (*Aside, looking towards the garden*). Bless my soul! I think I hear a dog barking. Most likely it is some one with a design upon my money. (*To Valère*). Do not stir; I am coming back directly.

SCENE VIII.—ELISE, VALÈRE.

EL. Are you jesting, Valère, to speak to him in that manner?

VAL. It is in order not to sour his temper, and to gain my end the better. To run counter to his opinions is the way to spoil everything; and there are certain minds which cannot be dealt with in a straightforward manner; temperaments averse to all resistance; restive characters, whom the truth causes to rear, who always set their faces against the straight road of reason, and whom you cannot lead except by turning them with their back towards the goal. Pretend to consent to what he wishes, you will gain your end all the better; and . . .

<sup>20</sup> The "without a dowry" is as lucky a dramatic hit as "The poor man" of *Tartuffe*, or, "What the devil was he going to in that galley?" of *The Rogueries of Scapin*. In Plautus' *Aulularia* (Act ii., Scene 2), old Megadorus asks for the hand of young Phædra, Euclio's daughter, who three times repeats that he has no "marriage portion" to give her.

EL. But this marriage, Valère!

VAL. We will find some pretext to break it off.

EL. But what to invent, if it is to be consummated this evening?

VAL. You must ask for a delay, and pretend to be ill.

EL. But the feint will be discovered, if they call in the doctors.

VAL. Are you jesting? What do they know about it? Come, come, with them you may have whatever illness you please; they will find you some reasons to tell you whence it proceeds.

SCENE IX.—HARPAGON, ELISE, VALÈRE.

HAR. (*Aside, at the further end of the stage*). It is nothing, thank Heaven.

VAL. (*Not seeing Harpagon*). In short, our last resource is flight, which will shelter us from everything; and if your love, fair Elise, be capable of acting with firmness . . . (*Perceiving Harpagon*). Yes, a daughter ought to obey her father. She ought not to look at the shape of a husband; and when the great argument of *without a dowry* is added to it, she must be ready to accept what is given to her.

HAR. Good: that is well spoken.

VAL. I crave your pardon, Sir, if I am a little warm, and take the liberty of speaking as I do.

HAR. How now! I am delighted with it, and I wish you to take an absolute control over her. (*To Elise*). Yes, you may run away as much as you like, I invest him with the authority which Heaven has given me over you, and I will have you do all that he tells you.

VAL. (*To Elise*). After that, resist my remonstrances.

SCENE X.—HARPAGON, VALÈRE.

VAL. With your leave, Sir, I will follow her, to continue the advice which I was giving her.

HAR. Yes, you will oblige me. By all means . . .

VAL. It is as well to keep her tight in hand.

HAR. True. We must . . .

VAL. Do not be uneasy. I think that I shall succeed.

HAR. Do, do. I am going to take a little stroll in town, and I shall be back presently.

VAL. (*Addressing himself to Elise, leaving by the door, through which she went out*). Yes, money is more precious than anything else in this world, and you ought to thank Heaven for having given you such an honest man for a father. He knows how to go through life. When any one offers to take a girl without a dowry, one should look no farther. It sums up everything; and *without dowry* makes up for beauty, youth, birth, honour, wisdom, and probity.

HAR. Ah! the honest fellow! He speaks like an oracle. It is a rare piece of luck to have such a servant!

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ACT II.

SCENE I.—CLÉANTE, LA FLÈCHE.

CLE. Ah! wretch that you are! where have you been? Did I not give you the order . . .

LA FL. Yes, Sir; and I came here to wait for you without stirring: but your father, the most surly of men, ordered me out in spite of myself, at the risk of a thrashing.

CLE. How is our affair getting on? Matters press more than ever, and since I have seen you, I have found out that my father is my rival.

LA FL. Your father in love?

CLE. Yes; and I have had the utmost difficulty in concealing from him the trouble which these tidings have caused me.

LA FL. He meddle with love! What the devil put that in his head? Is he making fun of every one? and has love been made for people like him?

CLE. This passion must have got into his head to punish me for my sins.

LA FL. But for what reason do you keep your love a secret from him?

CLE. In order to give him less suspicion, and to keep,

if needs be, the means open for dissuading him from this marriage. What answer have they made to you?

LA FL. Upon my word, Sir, borrowers are very unlucky people; and one must put up with strange things, when one is compelled, like you, to pass through the hands of money-lenders.<sup>21</sup>

CLE. Will the affair fall through?

LA FL. I beg your pardon. Our Master Simon, the agent who has been recommended to us, an active and zealous man, says that he has done wonders for you, and he assures me that your face alone has won his heart.

CLE. Shall I have the fifteen thousand francs which I want?

LA FL. Yes, but with some trifling conditions which you must accept, if you purpose that the affair should be carried through.

CLE. Has he allowed you to speak to the person who is to lend the money?

LA FL. Ah! really, things are not managed in that way. He takes even more care to remain unknown than you do; and these things are much greater mysteries than you think. Simon would not tell me his name at all, and he will be confronted with you to-day in a house borrowed for the occasion, to be informed by you, personally, of your own substance and that of your family; and I have no doubt that the very name of your father may make things go smoothly.

CLE. And above all our mother being dead, whose property cannot be alienated.

LA FL. Here are some clauses, which he has himself dictated to our go-between, to be shown to you before doing anything:—"Provided that the lender see all his securities, and that the borrower be of age, and of a family whose estate is ample, solid, secure, and undoubted, and free from all incumbrance, a binding and correct

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<sup>21</sup> In the original, *des fesse-matthieux*, because Saint Matthew was, before his conversion, a tax-gatherer; a profession which was, at all times, considered to be connected with usury. Hence, in old French the expression *fester saint Matthieu*, for "to lend money at exorbitant interest;" whilst the usurer himself was called *feste-Matthieu*, which became corrupted into *fesse-matthieu*.

bond shall be executed before a notary, the most honest man to be found, and who, for this purpose, shall be chosen by the borrower, to whom it is of the greatest importance that the instrument shall be regularly drawn up."

CLE. There is nothing to object to that.

LA FL. "The lender, in order not to charge his conscience with the least scruple, will only lend his money at a little more than five and a half per cent."<sup>22</sup>

CLE. At a little more than five and a half per cent? Zounds! that is honest enough. There is no reason to complain.

LA FL. That is true. "But as the lender has not the sum in question by him, and as, to oblige the borrower, he is himself obliged to borrow it of some one at the rate of twenty per cent.,<sup>23</sup> it shall be agreed that the said first borrower shall pay this interest, without prejudice of the rest, seeing that it is only to oblige him that the said lender takes up that loan."

CLE. What the devil! what Jew, what Arab is this? This is more than twenty-five per cent.<sup>24</sup>

LA FL. It is true, that is what I have said. It is for you to see to that.

CLE. What can I see? I want the money, and I am bound to consent to everything.

LA FL. That is the answer which I made.

CLE. There is something else still?

LA FL. Nothing but a small matter. "Of the fifteen thousand francs required, the lender can count down in cash only twelve thousand; and, for the remaining thousand crowns, the borrower will have to take them out in chattels, clothing, and jewelry, of which the following is the memorandum, and which the lender has set down honestly at the lowest possible price."

CLE. What does this mean?

LA FL. Listen to the memorandum. "First, a four-

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<sup>22</sup> In the original *au denier dix-huit*, which means at the interest of one groat for every eighteen lent, or a little more than five and a half per cent.

<sup>23</sup> The original has *au denier cinq*.

<sup>24</sup> In the original *au denier quatre*.

post bed, elegantly adorned with Hungary-lace bands, with hangings of olive coloured cloth, with six chairs, and a counterpane of the same; the whole in very good condition, and lined with a shot taffetas, red and blue. Item: a tester for this bed, of good Aumale, pale rose-coloured serge, with large and small silk fringes."

CLE. What does he want me to do with it?

LA FL. Wait. "Item; Tapestry hangings, representing the loves of Gombaudo and Macée."<sup>26</sup> Item: a large walnut wood table, with twelve columns or turned legs, which draws out at both sides. provided with six stools underneath it."

CLE. What have I to do, Zounds . . .

LA FL. Only have patience. "Item: three large muskets inlaid with mother-of-pearl, with the necessary rests."<sup>27</sup> Item: a brick furnace, with two retorts, and three receivers very useful for those who have a turn for distilling."

CLE. I am going mad.

LA FL. Gently. "Item: a Bologna lute with all its strings, or nearly all. Item: a trou-madame table,"<sup>28</sup> a

<sup>26</sup> In all probability, the loves of Gombaudo and Macée formed a sort of comic pastoral, which must have been very popular in former times, and doubtless had become rather antiquated when La Flèche spoke of them. Still they are mentioned as a representation of rustic gallantry in Brittany, as late as 1795. In the inventory of goods left by Molière, and taken after his death, we find "some Flanders hangings representing a landscape" (*de verdure*), and valued eight hundred *livres*, which seems to be the same as those valued eleven hundred *livres*, mentioned in the marriage contract of M. de Montalant with the daughter of Molière, and where, however, in speaking of these hangings, they are said to be adorned "with some small figures." In the inventory taken after de Montalant's death, on the 15th of September, 1738, we find "some Antwerp hangings, valued five hundred and fifty *livres*, representing the history of Perseus and Andromeda," which may have belonged to Molière. In the first Scene of the first Act of *Love is the best Doctor* (see Vol. II., page 148), M. Guillaume advises Sganarelle to buy for his daughter "a beautiful set of hangings, with a landscape, or some figures in them." I owe this note to the late M. Soulié, *Recherches sur Molière*, p. 270.

<sup>27</sup> The soldiers used formerly a forked stick, which they stuck with the point in the ground, on which fork they rested their heavy musket, in order to aim better.

<sup>28</sup> In the original *trou-madame*. Ash in his dictionary says: "Trou-madame—a play in which a bowl is thrown so as to pass through a range of holes at a distance properly numbered for the game."

draught-board, with the game of mother goose, restored from the Greeks, very agreeable to pass the time when one has nothing else to do. Item: a lizzard's skin of three feet and a half, stuffed with hay: a very pretty curiosity to hang at the ceiling of a room. The whole of the above-mentioned, really worth more than four thousand five hundred francs, and brought down to the value of a thousand crowns, through the discretion of the lender."<sup>28</sup>

CLE. May the plague choke him with his discretion, the wretch, the cut-throat that he is! Has one ever heard of similar usury? Is he not satisfied with the tremendous interest which he demands, but must needs force me to take for the three thousand francs the old lumber which he picks up? I shall not get two hundred crowns for the whole of it; and nevertheless I must make up my mind to consent to what he wishes; for he has it in his power to make me accept anything: and the scoundrel holds me with a knife to my throat.

LA FL. Without offence, Sir, I see you exactly in the high road which Panurge took to ruin himself: taking money in advance, buying dear, selling cheap, and eating his corn whilst it was but grass.<sup>29</sup>

CLE. What am I to do? See to what young people are reduced by the cursed stinginess of their fathers, and then people are surprised when sons wish their fathers dead!

LA FL. One must confess that yours, with his stinginess, would incense the steadiest man in the world. I have, Heaven be praised, no very great inclination to be hanged; and, among my colleagues whom I see dabbling in many trifling things, I know well enough how to get cleverly out of the scrape, and to keep as clear as possible of these little amenities which savour more or less of the

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<sup>28</sup> The idea of this list is taken from a comedy of Boisrobert, called *la Belle Plaideuse*, and played in 1654; but the servant Philipin informs his master Ergaste, that, to make up the fifteen thousand francs which the latter wishes to borrow, the lender gives only one thousand crowns cash, and the rest in "monkeys, very fine parrots, and twelve large cannons."

<sup>29</sup> Rabelais in his *Pantagruel* (Book iii., ch. 2) says that Panurge was "burning the great logs for the sale of the ashes, borrowing money beforehand, buying dear, selling cheap, and eating his corn, as it were, whilst it was but grass."

rope ; but, to tell you the truth, he would, by his way of acting, give me the temptation to rob him ; and I verily believe that, by doing so, I would commit a meritorious action.<sup>30</sup>

CLE. Give me this memorandum, that I may have another look at it.

SCENE II.—HARPAGON, MASTER SIMON, CLÉANTE and LA FLÈCHE at the farther end of the stage.

SIM. Yes, Sir, it is a young man who is in want of money ; his affairs compel him to find some, and he will consent to all that you dictate to him.

HAR. But think you, Master Simon, that there is no risk to run ? and do you know the name, the property, and the family of him for whom you speak ?

SIM. No. In reality I cannot well inform you about that, and it is only by chance that I have been recommended to him ; but he will himself explain all these things to you, and his servant has assured me that you will be satisfied when you shall know him. All that I am able to tell you is that his family is very rich, that he has already lost his mother, and he will engage himself, if you wish it, that his father shall die before eight months are over.

HAR. That is something. Charity, Master Simon, enjoins us to be agreeable to people when we can.

SIM. That needs no comment.

LA FL. (*Softly, to Cléante, recognizing Master Simon*). What does this mean ? Master Simon who is speaking to your father ?

CLE. (*Softly, to La Flèche*). Can any one have told him who I am and are you perhaps betraying me ?

SIM. (*To Cléante and La Flèche*). Ah, ah ! you are in a great hurry ! Who told you that it was here. (*To Harpagon*). It is not I, at least, Sir, who have given them your name and address ; but, in my opinion, there is no great harm in this ; they are discreet persons, and you can here come to an understanding with one another.

<sup>30</sup> These words of La Flèche denote that he intends to steal the miser's money-box (see Act iv., Scene 6), but more to play the latter a trick than as a seriously planned robbery.



HAR. How?

SIM. (*Pointing to Cléante*). This gentleman is the party who wishes to borrow the fifteen thousand francs of which I spoke.

HAR. What, hangdog, it is you who abandon yourself to these culpable extravagances.

CLE. What! it is you, father, who lend yourself to these shameful deeds! (*Master Simon runs away, and La Flèche hides himself.*)

SCENE III.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE.

HAR. It is you who wish to ruin yourself by such censurable loans?

CLE. It is you who seek to enrich yourself by such criminal usury?

HAR. Can you dare, after this, to appear before me?

CLE. Can you dare, after this, to show your face to the world.<sup>21</sup>

HAR. Are you not ashamed, tell me, to practice this sort of excesses, to rush into these dreadful expenses, and to dissipate so shamefully the property which your parents have amassed for you by the sweat of their brow?

CLE. Do you not blush to dishonour your station by the trade you are engaged in; to sacrifice glory and reputation to the insatiable desire of piling crown upon crown, and to surpass, in matters of interest, the most infamous tricks that were ever invented by the most notorious usurers?

HAR. Begone out of my sight, scoundrel! begone out of my sight!

CLE. Who, think you, is the more criminal—he who buys the money of which he is in need, or he who steals money for which he has no use?

HAR. Begone, I say, and do not break the drums of my ears. (*Alone*). After all, I am not so vexed about this adventure; it will be a lesson to me to keep more than ever an eye upon his proceedings.

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<sup>21</sup> Molière has borrowed also from Boisrobert's play, mentioned before, the primary idea of this scene.

## SCENE IV.—FROSINE, HARPAGON.

FRO. Sir.

HAR. Wait a moment : I shall be back directly to speak to you. ((*Aside*). I had better go and take a look at my money.

## SCENE V.—LA FLÈCHE, FROSINE.

LA FL. (*Without seeing Frosine*). The adventure is altogether funny ! He must have somewhere a large store of furniture ; for we could recognize nothing here from what is in the memorandum.

FRO. Eh ! is it you, my poor La Flèche ! How comes this meeting ?

LA FL. Ah ! ah ! it is you, Frosine ! What brings you here ?

FRO. The same that brings me everywhere else ; to fetch and carry, to render myself serviceable to people, and to profit as much as possible by the small talents of which I am possessed. You know that in this world we must live by our wits, and that to persons like me, Heaven has given no other income than intrigue and industry.

LA FL. Have you any dealings with the master of this house ?

FRO. Yes. I am arranging some small matter for him, for which I expect a reward.

LA FL. From him ? Ah ! you will have to be wide-awake enough if you get anything out of him ; and I warn you that money is very scarce in this house

FRO. There are certain services that touch to the quick marvellously.

LA FL. I am your humble servant. You do not know Mr. Harpagon yet. Mr. Harpagon is of all human beings the least human, of all mortals the hardest and most close-fisted. There is no service that touches his gratitude deeply enough to make him unloose his purse-strings. Praise, esteem, kindness in words, and friendship, as much as you like ; but money, nothing of the kind. There is nothing drier and more arid than his good graces and his caresses ; and *to give* is a word for which he has such an aversion, that he never says : *I give you*, but *I lend you good day*.

FRO. Gad! I have the art of drawing something out of people; I have the secret of entering into their affections, of tickling their hearts, and of finding out their most sensitive spots.

LA FL. Of no avail here. I defy you to soften the man we are speaking of, so that he will give money. Upon this subject he is a Turk, but of a turkishness to cause the despair of every one; and one might starve, and he would not budge. In one word, he loves money better than reputation, than honour, and than virtue; and the very sight of one who asks for it sends him into fits; it is touching him in his mortal part, it is piercing his heart, it is tearing out his very entrails; and if . . . But he is coming back; I am going.

SCENE VI.—HARPAGON, FROSINE.

HAR. (*Aside*). Everything is going on right. (*Aloud*). Well! what is it, Frosine?

FRO. Gad, how well you are looking; you are the very picture of health!

HAR. Who? I!

FRO. I never saw you with such a fresh and jolly complexion.

HAR. Really?

FRO. How? You never in your life looked so young as you do now; I see people of five-and-twenty who look older than you.

HAR. I am over sixty, nevertheless, Frosine.

FRO. Well! what does that signify, sixty years? that is nothing to speak of! It is the very flower of one's age, that is; and you are just entering the prime of manhood.

HAR. That is true; but twenty years less would do me no harm, I think.

FRO. Are you jesting? You have no need of that, and you are made of the stuff to live a hundred.

HAR. Do you think so?

FRO. Indeed I do. You show all the signs of it. Hold up your head a moment. Yes, it is there, well enough between your eyes, a sign of long life!

HAR. You are a judge of that sort of thing?

FRO. Undoubtedly I am. Show me your hand. Begad, what a line of life!

HAR. How?

FRO. Do you not see how far this line goes?<sup>22</sup>

HAR. Well! what does it mean?

FRO. Upon my word, I said a hundred; but you shall pass six score.

HAR. Is it possible?

FRO. They will have to kill you, I tell you; and you shall bury your children, and your children's children.

HAR. So much the better! How is our affair getting on?

FRO. Need you ask? Does one ever see me meddle with anything that I do not bring to an issue? But for match-making, especially, I have a marvellous talent. There are not two people in the world whom I cannot manage, in a very short time, to couple together; and I believe that, if I took it into my head, I should marry the grand Turk to the republic of Venice.<sup>23</sup> To be sure, there were no very great difficulties in this matter. As I am intimate with the ladies, I have often spoken to each of them, of you; and I have told the mother of the design which you had upon Mariane, from seeing her pass in the street, and taking the fresh air at her window.

HAR. Who answered . . .

FRO. She has received your proposal with joy; and when I gave her to understand that you very much wished her daughter to be present this evening at the marriage-contract, which was to be signed for yours, she has consented without difficulty, and has entrusted her to me for the purpose.

<sup>22</sup> This dialogue is translated from a comedy of Ariosto, *I Suppositi* (Act i., Scene 2).

<sup>23</sup> In Rabelais' forty-first chapter of the third book of *Pantagruel*, "How Bridle-goose relateth the history of the reconcilers of parties at variance in matters of law," Peter Dendin says to his son Tenot—"I tell thee, my jolly son Dendin, that by this rule and method I could settle a firm peace, or at least clap up a cessation of arms, and truce for many years to come betwixt the great King and the Venetian State,—the Emperor and the Cantons of Switzerland,—the English and the Scotch, and betwixt the Pope and the Ferrarians. Shall I go yet further? Yea, as I would have God to help me betwixt the Turk and the Sophy, the Tartars and the Muscovites."

HAR. It is because I am obliged to offer a supper to Mr. Anselme; and I shall be glad that she share the treat.

FRO. You are right. She is to pay a visit after dinner to your daughter, whence she intends to take a turn in the fair, to come and sup here afterwards.

HAR. Well! they shall go together in my coach, which I will lend them.

FRO. That will do very nicely.

HAR. But, Frosine, have you spoken to the mother respecting the portion she can give her daughter? Have you told her that she must bestir herself a little; that she should make some effort; that she must even bleed herself a little on an occasion like that? For, after all, one does not marry a girl without her bringing something.

FRO. How something! She is a girl who brings you twelve thousand francs a-year.

HAR. Twelve thousand francs!

FRO. Yes. To begin with; she has been brought up and accustomed to strict economy in feeding. She is a girl used to live on salad, milk, cheese, and apples; and who, in consequence, will neither want a well-appointed table, nor exquisite broths, nor peeled barley, at every turn, nor other delicacies which would be necessary to any other woman; and let these things cost ever so little, they always mount to about three thousand francs a-year at the least. Besides this, she has no taste for anything but the utmost simplicity, and does not care for sumptuous dresses, or valuable jewels or magnificent furniture, to which other young ladies are so much given; and that comes to more than four thousand francs per annum. In addition, she has a terrible aversion to gambling, not a common thing in women of the present day; for I know one in our neighbourhood who has lost more than twenty thousand francs this year at *trente et quarante*. But let us only estimate it at a fourth of that. Five thousand francs a-year at play, and four thousand in jewelry and dresses, that makes nine thousand; and a thousand crowns, say, for the food: are there not your twelve thousand francs a-year?<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> This idea is probably borrowed from Plautus' *Aulularia* (Act iii., Scene 10), where Megadorus consoles himself for having a bride without

HAR. Yes: that is not so bad; but this reckoning contains, after all, nothing real.

FRO. Pardon me. Is it not something real to bring you for a marriage portion great sobriety, the inheritance of a great love for simplicity of dress, and the acquisition of a great hatred for gambling?

HAR. Surely it is a joke to wish to make up her dowry to me out of expenses to which she will not go. I am not going to give a receipt for what I do not receive; and I shall have to get something down on the nail.

FRO. Good gracious! you shall get enough; and they have spoken to me of a certain country where they have some property, whereof you will become the master.

HAR. That remains to be seen. But, Frosine, there is something else still which makes me uneasy. The girl is young, as you can see; and young people ordinarily love only their equals, and seek only their society. I am afraid that a man of my age may not be to her taste, and that this might produce certain little troubles in my house, which would not at all suit me.

FRO. Ah! how little you know her! This is another peculiarity which I had to mention to you. She has a frightful aversion to young people, and cares for none except for old men.

HAR. She?

FRO. Yes, she. I should like that you had heard her speak upon that subject. She cannot at all bear the sight of a young man; but nothing gives her greater delight, she says, than to behold a handsome old man with a majestic beard. The oldest are the most charming to her; so I warn you beforehand not to make yourself look younger than you really are. She wishes one at least to be a sexagenarian; and it is not more than four months ago, that, on the point of being married, she flatly broke off the match, when it came out that her lover was but fifty-six years of age, and that he did not put spectacles on to sign the contract.

HAR. Only for that?

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a dowry, by descanting upon the ruinous expenses of women who have brought dowries to their husbands.

FRO. Yes. She says fifty-six will not do for her; and that above all things she cares for noses that wear spectacles.

HAR. You certainly tell me something new there.

FRO. She carries it farther than I could tell you. One may see some pictures and a few prints in her room; but what do you think they are? Portraits of Adonis, of Cephalus, of Paris, and of Apollo? Not at all. Beautiful likenesses of Saturn, of king Priam, of old Nestor, and of good father Anchises on his son's back.

HAR. This is admirable. That is what I should never have thought, and I am very glad to hear that she is of that disposition. In fact, had I been a woman, I should never have cared for young men.

FRO. I should think so. A nice lot they are these young men, to care for them! pretty beauties, indeed, these fine sparks to be enamoured of! I should like to know what one can see in them!

HAR. As for me, I cannot understand it at all. I do not know how there are women who like them so much.

FRO. They must be downright fools. Does it sound like common sense to think youth amiable? Are they men at all, these young fops,<sup>25</sup> and can one love such animals?

HAR. That is what I say every day; with their voices like chicken-hearted fellows, three small hairs in the beard twirled like a cat's whiskers; their tow-wigs, their breeches quite hanging down, and their open breasts!

FRO. Indeed! they are well built compared with a person like you! That is what I call a man; there is something there to please the sight; and that is the way to be made and dressed to inspire love.

HAR. Then you like my appearance?

FRO. Do I like your appearance! You are charming; your figure is worth painting. Turn round a little, if you please. Nothing could be better. Let me see you walk. That is a well-built body, free and easy as it ought to be, and without a sign of illness.

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<sup>25</sup> The original has *blondins*. See *The School for Husbands*, Vol. I., page 264, note 8.

HAR. None to speak of, thank Heaven.<sup>86</sup> Nothing but my cough, which worries me now and then.

FRO. That is nothing. It does not become you badly, seeing that you cough very gracefully.

HAR. Just tell me: has Mariane not seen me yet? She has not taken any notice of me in going past?

FRO. No; but we have spoken a great deal of you. I have tried to paint your person to her, and I have not failed to vaunt your merits, and the advantage which it would be to her to have a husband like you.

HAR. You have done well and I thank you for it.

FRO. I have, Sir, a slight request to make to you. I have a law-suit which I am on the point of losing for want of a little money (*Harpagon assumes a serious look*); and you might easily enable me to gain this suit by doing me a little kindness. You would not believe how delighted she will be to see you. (*Harpagon resumes his liveliness*). How you will charm her, and how this old-fashioned ruff<sup>87</sup> will take her fancy! But above all things, she will like your breeches fastened to your doublet with tags; that will make her mad for you; and a lover who wears tags will be most acceptable to her.

HAR. Certainly, I am delighted to hear you say so.

FRO. Really, sir, this law-suit is of the utmost consequence to me. (*Harpagon resumes his serious air*). If I lose it, I am ruined; and some little assistance would set my affairs in order. . . . I should like you to have seen her delight at hearing me speak of you. (*Harpagon resumes his liveliness*). Joy shone in her eyes at the enumeration of your good qualities; and, in short, I have made her very anxious to have this match entirely concluded.

HAR. You have pleased me very much, Frosine; and I confess that I am extremely obliged to you.

FRO. I pray you, Sir, to give me the little assistance which I ask of you. (*Harpagon resumes his serious air*).

<sup>86</sup> In saying these words, Harpagon begins to cough, and as Molière was subject to this, it became quite natural to him, when he played this part.

<sup>87</sup> The original has *fraise à l'antique*. See *The School for Husbands*, Vol. I., page 266, note 10.



It will put me on my legs again, and I shall be for ever grateful to you.

HAR. Good-bye. I am going to finish my letters.

FRO. I assure you, Sir, that you could never come to my relief in a greater need.

HAR. I will give orders that my coach be ready to take you to the fair.

FRO. I would not trouble you, if I were not compelled to it from necessity.

HAR. And I will take care that the supper shall be served early, so as not to make you ill.

FRO. Do not refuse me the service which I ask of you. You would not believe, Sir, the pleasure which . . .

HAR. I must begone. Some one is calling me. Till by-and-by.

FRO. (*Alone*). May ague seize you, and send you to the devil, you stingy cur! The rascal has resisted firmly all my attacks. But I must, for all that, not abandon the attempt; and I have got the other side, from whom, at any rate, I am certain to draw a good reward.

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### ACT III.

SCENE I.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ELISE, VALÈRE; MISTRESS CLAUDE *holding a broom*, MASTER JACQUES, LA MERLUCHE, BRINDAVOINE.

HAR. Come here, all of you, that I may give you my orders for just now, and tell every one what he has to do. Come here, Mistress Claude; let us begin with you. (*Looking at her broom*). That is right, arms in hand. I trust to you for cleaning up everywhere: and above all, take care not to rub the furniture too hard, for fear of wearing it out. Besides this, I appoint you to look after the bottles during the supper; and, if one is missing, or if something gets broken, I shall hold you responsible, and deduct it from your wages.

JAC. (*Aside*). There is policy in that punishment.

HAR. (*To Mistress Claude*). You can go.

X SCENE II.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ELISE, VALÈRE, MASTER JACQUES, BRINDAVOINE, LA MERLUCHE.

HAR. You, Brindavoine, and you, La Merluche, I confide to you the care of rinsing the glasses, and of serving out the drink, but only when the people are thirsty, and not in the manner of these impertinent lacqueys who come and provoke them, and put drinking into their heads when they have no thought of such a thing. Wait till you are asked for it more than once, and bear in mind always to bring a good deal of water.

JAC. (*Aside*). Yes. Wine undiluted mounts to the head.

MER. Shall we throw off our smocks, Sir?

HAR. Yes, when you see the people coming; and take care not to spoil your clothes.

BRIN. You know, Sir, that the front of my doublet is covered with a large stain of oil from the lamp.

MER. And I, Sir, I have a large hole in the seat of my breeches, and saving your presence, people can see . . .

HAR. Peace; keep it adroitly to the side of the wall, and always show your front to the world. (*To Brindavoine, showing him how he is to keep his hat before his doublet, in order to hide the stain.*). And you, always hold your hat thus while you are waiting upon the guests.

X SCENE III.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, ELISE, VALÈRE, MASTER JACQUES.

HAR. As for you, daughter, you will keep an eye upon what goes away from the table, and take care that nothing be wasted. It becomes girls to do so. Meanwhile, get yourself ready to receive my intended properly. She is coming to visit you, and will take you to the fair with her. Do you hear what I say to you?

EL. Yes, father.

SCENE IV.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, MASTER JACQUES.

HAR. And you, my foppish son, to whom I have been good enough to forgive what has happened just now, do not take it into your head to show her a sour face.

CLE. I! father? a sour face. And for what reason?

HAR. Egad! we know the ways of children whose fathers marry again, and with what sort of eyes they are in the habit of looking at their so-called stepmothers. But if you wish me to lose the recollection of this last escapade of yours, I recommend you, above all, to show this lady a friendly countenance, and to give her, in short, the best possible reception.

CLE. To tell you the truth, father, I cannot promise you to be glad that she is to become my stepmother. I should tell a lie if I said so to you; but as for receiving her well and showing her a friendly countenance, I promise to obey you punctually on this head.

HAR. Take care you do, at least.

CLE. You shall see that you shall have no cause to complain.

HAR. You had better.

SCENE V.—HARPAGON, VALÈRE, MASTER JACQUES.

HAR. You will have to help me in this, Valère. Now, Master Jacques, draw near, I have left you for the last.

JAC. Is it to your coachman, Sir, or to your cook, that you wish to speak? For I am both the one and the other.

HAR. It is to both.

JAC. But to which of the two first?

HAR. To the cook.

JAC. Then wait a minute, if you please.

*(Master Jacques takes off his livery coat, and appears in a cook's dress).*

HAR. What the deuce does that ceremony mean?

JAC. You have but to speak now.

HAR. I have promised, Master Jacques, to give a supper to-night.

JAC. *(Aside).* Most miraculous!

HAR. Just tell me: will you dish us up something good?

JAC. Yes, if you give me plenty of money.

HAR. The deuce, always money. It seems to me as if they could speak of nothing else; money, money, money! It is the only word they have got on their lips; money!

they always speak of money. That is their chief argument,<sup>28</sup> money.

VAL. I have never heard a more impertinent answer than that. A great wonder to dish up something good with plenty of money! It is the easiest thing in the world; any fool can do as much; but a clever man should speak of dishing up something good with little money.

JAC. Something good with little money!

VAL. Yes.

JAC. (*To Valère*). Upon my word, Master Steward, you would oblige us by showing us that secret, and by taking my place as cook; you that are meddling with everything in this house, and playing the factotum.

HAR. Hold your tongue. What shall we want?

JAC. Apply to your steward here, who will dish you up something good for little money.

HAR. Enough! I wish you to answer me.

JAC. How many people are to sit down?

HAR. We shall be eight or ten; but you must not count upon more than eight. If there is enough for eight, there is enough for ten.

VAL. That needs no comment.

JAC. Very well! we must have four first-rate soups and five small dishes. Soups . . . Entrées . . .

HAR. What the devil! there is enough to feed a whole town.

JAC. Roast . . .

HAR. (*Putting his hand over Jacques' mouth*). Hold! wretch, you will eat up all my substance.

JAC. Side-dishes.<sup>29</sup>

HAR. (*Putting his hand over Jacques' mouth again*). What! more still?

VAL. (*To Jacques*). Do you intend to make every one

<sup>28</sup> In the original *épée de chevet*, a sword that hung at the head of the bed, and was always ready at hand when needed; hence figuratively an argument, an answer always ready at hand.

<sup>29</sup> In the edition of 1632. Master Jacques mentions a great many dishes by name; but this is clearly an interpolation of some actor, who thought to be funnier than Molière, but who forgot that Harpagon would never have listened quietly to a long list of different things. In Fielding's *Miser* James (Jacques) enumerates also a great many eatables.

burst? and think you that master has invited people with the intention of killing them with food? Go and read a little the precepts of health, and ask the doctors whether there is aught more prejudicial to man than eating to excess.

HAR. He is right.

VAL. Learn, Master Jacques, you and the like of you, that a table overloaded with viands is a cut-throat business; that, to show one's self the friend of those whom one invites, frugality should reign in the meals which one offers; and that according to the saying of an ancient, *we must eat to live, and not live to eat.*<sup>40</sup>

HAR. Ah! how well that is said! Come here, that I may embrace you for that saying. This is the finest sentence that I ever heard in my life; *one must live to eat and not eat to li*. . . . No, that is not it. How do you put it?

VAL. *That we must eat to live and not live to eat.*

HAR. (*To Master Jacques*). That is it. Do you hear it? (*To Valère*). Who is the great man who has said that?

VAL. I do not recollect his name just now.

HAR. Just remember to write down these words for me: I wish to have them engraved in letters of gold on the mantel-piece of my dining-room.

VAL. I shall not forget it. And as for your supper, you have but to leave it to me; I shall manage everything right enough.

HAR. Do so.

JAC. So much the better! I shall have less trouble.

HAR. (*To Valère*). We must have some of these things of which people eat very little, and which fill quickly; some good fat beans, with a potted pie, well stuffed with chesnuts. Let there be plenty of that.

VAL. Depend upon me.

HAR. And now, Master Jacques, you must clean my coach.

JAC. Wait; that is a matter for the coachman. (*Puts his livery coat on*). You were saying . . .

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<sup>40</sup> The Romans had a kind of adage—*ede ut vivas, ne vivas ut edas*—which they sometimes expressed by the initials E. V. V. N. V. V. E.

HAR. That you must clean my coach, and hold the horses in readiness to drive to the fair . . .

JAC. Your horses, Sir? Upon my word, they are not at all in a fit state to go. I will not tell you that they are on the straw; the poor beasts have not got even that much, and it would not be telling the truth; but you make them keep such austere fasts that they are no longer anything but ghosts or shadows, with horses' shapes.

HAR. They are very ill, and yet they are doing nothing!

JAC. And because they do nothing, Sir, must they not eat? It would be far better to work the poor brutes much, and to feed them the same. It breaks my heart to see them in such a wretched condition; for, after all, I have got tender feeling for my horses; it seems to me it is myself, when I see them suffer. Not a day passes but I take the meat out of my own mouth to feed them; and, Sir, it is being too cruel to have no pity for one's neighbour.

HAR. The work will not be very hard to go as far as the fair.

JAC. No, Sir, I have not the heart to drive them, and I would not have it on my conscience to give them the whip in the state in which they are. How can you wish them to draw a coach when they can hardly drag themselves along?

VAL. Sir, I will make our neighbour, Picard, take charge of them and drive them; he will be at the same time needed to get the supper ready.

JAC. Be it so; I prefer their dying under other people's hands than under mine.

VAL. Master Jacques is getting considerate!

JAC. Sir Steward is getting indispensable!

HAR. Peace.

JAC. I cannot bear flatterers, Sir; and I see what he makes of it; that his perpetual looking after the bread, the wine, the wood, the salt, the candles, is done only with the view of currying favour with you, and getting into your good books. This drives me mad, and I am sorry to hear every day what the world says of you; for, after all, I have some feeling for you; and, after my horses, you are the person whom I love most.

HAR. Might I know, Master Jacques, what people say of me.

JAC. Yes, Sir, if I could be sure that it would not make you angry.

HAR. No, not in the least.

JAC. I beg your pardon; I know full well that I shall put you in a rage.

HAR. Not at all. On the contrary, it will be obliging me, and I shall be glad to learn how people speak of me.

JAC. Since you will have it, Sir, I shall tell you frankly that people everywhere make a jest of you, that they pelt us with a thousand jokes from every quarter on your account, and that they are never more delighted than when holding you up to ridicule, and continually relating stories of your meanness. One says that you have special almanacks printed, in which you double the ember weeks and vigils, in order to profit by the fast days, which you compel your people to keep; another that you have always a quarrel ready for your servants at New Year's day, or when they leave you, so that you may find a reason for not giving them anything. That one tells that you once sued one of your neighbour's cats for having eaten the remainder of a leg of mutton; this one again that you were surprised one night in purloining the hay of your own horses, and that your coachman, that is, the one who was here before me, dealt you I do not know how many blows in the dark, of which you never broached a word. In short, shall I tell you? one can go nowhere without hearing you hauled over the coals on all sides. You are the byword and laughing-stock of every one; and you are never spoken of, except under the names of miser, curmudgeon, hunks and usurer.

HAR. (*Thrashing Master Jacques*). You are a numscull, a rascal, a scoundrel, and an impudent fellow.

JAC. Well! did I not say so beforehand? You would not believe me. I told you well enough that I should make you angry by telling you the truth.

HAR. That will teach you how to speak.

## SCENE VI.—VALÈRE, MASTER JACQUES.

VAL. (*Laughing*). From what I can see, Master Jacques, your candour is ill rewarded.

JAC. Zounds! Master Upstart, who assume the man of consequence, it is not your business. Laugh at your cud-gel-blows when you shall receive them, but do not come here to laugh at mine.

VAL. Ah! Sir Master Jacques, do not get angry, I beg of you.

JAC. (*Aside*). He is knuckling under. I shall bully him, and, if he is fool enough to be afraid of me, I shall give him a gentle drubbing. (*Aloud*). Are you aware, Master Laugher, that I am not in a laughing humour, and that if you annoy me, I will make you laugh on the wrong side of your mouth.

(*Master Jacques drives Valère to the far end of the stage, threatening him.*)

VAL. Eh! gently.

JAC. How, gently? it does not suit me.

VAL. Pray.

JAC. You are an impertinent fellow.

VAL. Sir Master Jacques . . .

JAC. There is no Sir Master Jacques at all.<sup>41</sup> If I had a stick, I would give you a good drubbing.

VAL. How, a stick! (*Valère makes Master Jacques retreat in his turn.*)

JAC. Eh! I was not speaking of that.

VAL. Are you aware, Master Boaster, that I am the very man to give you a drubbing myself?

JAC. I do not doubt it.

VAL. That you are, in all, nothing but a scrub of a cook?

JAC. I am well aware of it.

VAL. And that you do not know me yet?

JAC. I ask your pardon.

VAL. You will thrash me, say you?

JAC. I said so only in jest.

VAL. And I say, that I do not relish your jests.

<sup>41</sup> The original has *pour un double*. A *double* was a very small coin; hence it is used for "not at all."



(*Thrashing him with a stick*). This will teach you, that you are but a sorry clown.<sup>42</sup>

JAC. (*Alone*). The plague take my candour ! it is a bad business : I give it up for the future, and I will no more speak the truth. I might put up with it from my master ; he has some right to thrash me ; but as for this Master Steward, I will have my revenge if I can.

SCENE VII.—MARIANE, FROSINE, MASTER JACQUES.

FRO. Do you know, Master Jacques, if your master is at home ?

JAC. Yes, indeed, he is ; I know it but too well.

FRO. Tell him, pray, that we are here.

SCENE VIII.—MARIANE, FROSINE.

MAR. Ah ! I feel very strange, Frosine ! and, if I must tell you what I feel, I dread this interview !

FRO. But why, and whence this uneasiness ?

MAR. Alas ! can you ask me ? and can you not imagine the alarms of any one at the sight of the rack to which she is going to be tied ?

FRO. I see well enough, that to die pleasantly, Harpagon, is not exactly the rack which you would care to embrace ; and I can see by your face, that this young spark, of whom you spoke to me, comes afresh into your head.

MAR. Yes ! it is an accusation, Frosine, from which I shall not defend myself ; and the respectful visits which he has paid us, have, I confess, made some impression on my heart.

FRO. But have you ascertained who he is ?

MAR. No, I do not know who he is. But this I know, that he is made to be beloved : that, if things could be left to my choice, I would sooner have him than any other, and that he is the chief cause in making me feel that the husband whom they wish to give me is a terrible torment.

FRO. Egad, all these youngsters are agreeable, and play their part well enough, but most of them are as poor as church mice : it will be much better for you to take an old

<sup>42</sup> This, according to Riccoboni, seems to be taken from an Italian play *La Cameriera nobile* (the noble-born Ladies-Maid).

husband who will make you a good settlement. I grant you that the senses will not find their account so well on the side I speak of, and that there are some little distastes to overcome with such a spouse ; but that cannot last, and his death, believe me, will soon put you in a position to take one who is more amiable, and who will mend all things.

MAR. Good gracious ! Frosine, it is a strange thing that, to be happy, we should wish for or await the death of some one ; the more so as death does not always accommodate itself to our projects.

FRO. Are you jesting ? You marry him only on condition of soon leaving you a widow ; and that must be one of the articles of the contract. It would be impertinent in him not to die within three months !<sup>43</sup> Here he is himself !

MAR. Ah ! Frosine, what a figure !

SCENE IX.—HARPAGON, MARIANE, FROSINE.

HAR. (*To Mariane*). Do not be offended, my beauty, that I come to you with my spectacles on. I know that your charms strike the eye sufficiently, are visible enough by themselves, and that there is no need of spectacles to perceive them ; but after all, it is through them that we look at the stars,<sup>44</sup> and I maintain and vouch for it that you are a star ; but a star, the brightest in the land of stars. Frosine, she does not answer a word, and does not testify, from what I can perceive, the slightest joy in seeing me.

FRO. It is because she is as yet taken all aback ; and besides, girls are always ashamed to show at first sight what passes in their hearts.

<sup>43</sup> In the second scene of the second act, Master Simon informs Harpagon that Cléante "will engage himself, that his father shall die before eight months are over." Her Frosine says : "It would be impertinent in him (Harpagon) not to die within three months." These unseemly jokes are signs of the times in which Molière lived, and in which there was less outward delicacy of feeling than at present.

<sup>44</sup> The French for spectacles is *lunettes*, and for a telescope, *lunette d'approche*, but in Molière's time often simply *lunette* ; hence the play on words.

HAR. You are right. (*To Mariane*). Here comes my daughter, sweet child, to welcome you.

SCENE X.—HARPAGON, ELISE, MARIANE, FROSINE.

MAR. I am much behind, Madam, in acquitting myself of such a visit.

EL. You have done, Madam, what it was my duty to do, and it was my place to have been beforehand with you.

HAR. You see what a great girl she is; but ill weeds grow apace.

MAR. (*In a whisper, to Frosine*). O! what an unpleasant man!

HAR. (*In a whisper, to Frosine*). What says the fair one?

FRO. That she thinks you admirable.

HAR. You do me too much honour, adorable pet.

MAR. (*Aside*). What a brute!

HAR. I am much obliged to you for these sentiments.

MAR. (*Aside*). I can hold out no longer.

SCENE XI.—HARPAGON, MARIANE, ELISE, CLÉANTE, FROSINE, BRINDAVOINE.

HAR. There comes my son also, to pay his respects to you.

MAR. (*In a whisper, to Frosine*). Ah! Frosine, what a meeting! It is the very person of whom I spoke to you.

FRO. (*To Mariane*). The adventure is wonderful.

HAR. I see that you are surprised at my having such grown-up children; but I shall soon be rid of one and the other.

CLE. (*To Mariane*). Madam, to tell you the truth, this is an adventure, which no doubt, I did not expect; and my father has not a little astonished me, when, a short time ago, he communicated to me the plan which he had formed.

MAR. I may say the same thing. It is an unforeseen meeting which surprises me as much as it does you; and I was not at all prepared for such an adventure.

CLE. It is true that my father, Madam, could not make a better choice, and that the honour of seeing you gives

me unfeigned joy, but for all that, I cannot give you the assurance that I rejoice at the design which you may have of becoming my step-mother. I avow to you that it would be too much for me to pay you that compliment; and by your leave, it is a title which I do not wish you. This speech may become coarse to some; but I am sure that you will be the one to take it in the proper sense; that it is a marriage, Madam, for which, as you may well imagine, I can have only repugnance; that you are not unaware, knowing what I am, how it clashes with my interests; and that, in short, you will not take it amiss when I tell you, with the permission of my father, that, if matters depended upon me, this marriage would not take place.<sup>46</sup>

HAR. This is a most impertinent compliment! What a pretty confession to make to her!

MAR. And I, in reply, must tell you, that things are pretty equal; and that, if you have any repugnance in seeing me your step-mother, I shall have, doubtless, no less in seeing you my step-son. Do not think, I pray you, that it is I who seek to give you that uneasiness. I should be very sorry to cause you any displeasure; and unless I see myself compelled to it by an absolute power, I give you my word that I shall not consent to a marriage that vexes you.

HAR. She is right. To a silly compliment, a similar retort is necessary. I beg your pardon, my dear, for the impertinence of my son; he is a young fool, who does not as yet know the consequence of what he says.

MAR. I promise you that what he has said has not at all offended me; on the contrary, he has pleased me by explaining thus his real feelings. I like such an avowal from his lips; and if he had spoken in any other way, I should have esteemed him the less for it.

HAR. It is too good of you to be willing thus to condone his faults. Time will make him wiser, and you shall see that he will alter his sentiments.

CLE. No, father, I am incapable of changing upon that point, and I beg urgently of this lady to believe me.

HAR. But see what madness! he goes still more strongly.

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<sup>46</sup> In the original, Cléante's speech is uttered in irregular blank verse.

CLE Do you wish me to go against my own heart?

HAR. Again! Perhaps you will be kind enough to change the conversation.

CLE. Well! since you wish me to speak in a different manner, allow me, Madam, to put myself in my father's place, and to confess to you that I have seen nothing in the world so charming as you; that I conceive nothing equal to the happiness of pleasing you, and that the title of your husband is a glory, a felicity which I would prefer to the destinies of the greatest princes on earth. Yes, Madam, the happiness of possessing you is, in my eyes, the best of all good fortunes; the whole of my ambition points to that. There is nothing which I would shrink from to make so precious a conquest; and the most powerful obstacles . . .

HAR. Gently, son, if you please.

CLE. It is a compliment which I pay for you to this lady.

HAR. Good Heavens! I have a tongue to explain myself, and I have no need of an interpreter like you. Come, hand chairs.

FRO. No; it is better that we should go to the fair now, so that we may return the sooner, and have ample time afterwards to converse with you.

HAR. (*To Brindavoine*). Have the horses put to the carriage.

SCENE XII. — HARPAGON, MARIANE, ELISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, FROSINE.

HAR. (*To Mariane*). I pray you to excuse me, fair child, if I forgot to offer you some refreshments before going.

CLE. I have provided for it, father, and have ordered some plates of China oranges, sweet citrons, and preserves, which I have sent for in your name.

HAR. (*Softly to Valère*). Valère!

VAL. (*To Harpagon*). He has lost his senses.

CLE. Do you think, father, that it is not sufficient? This lady will have the goodness to excuse that, if it please her.

MAR. It was not at all necessary.

CLE. Have you ever seen, Madam, a diamond more sparkling than the one which you see on my father's finger?

MAR. It sparkles much indeed.

CLE. (*Taking the diamond off his father's fingers, and handing it to Mariane*). You must see it close.

MAR. It is no doubt very beautiful, and throws out a deal of light.

CLE. (*Placing himself before Mariane, who is about to return the diamond*). No, Madam, it is in hands too beautiful. It is a present which my father makes you.

HAR. I?

CLE. Is it not true, father, that you wish this lady to keep it for your sake.

HAR. (*Softly to his son*). How?

CLE. (*To Mariane*). A pretty request indeed! He has given me a sign to make you accept it.

MAR. I do not wish to . . .

CLE. (*To Mariane*). Are you jesting? He does not care to take it back.

HAR. (*Aside*). I am bursting with rage!

MAR. It would be . . .

CLE. (*Preventing Mariane from returning the diamond*). No, I tell you; you would offend him.

MAR. Pray . . .

CLE. Not at all.

HAR. (*Aside*). May the plague . . .

CLE. He is getting angry at your refusal.

HAR. (*Softly to his son*). Ah! you wretch!

CLE. (*To Mariane*). You see that he is getting desperate.

HAR. (*In a suppressed tone to his son, threatening him*). Murderer that you are!

CLE. It is not my fault, father. I am doing all that I can to make her keep it; but she is obstinate.

HAR. (*In a great passion, whispering to his son*). Hang-dog!

CLE. You are the cause, Madam, of my father's upbraiding me.

HAR. (*Same as before, to his son*). The scoundrel!

CLE. (*To Mariane*). You will make him ill. Pray, Madam, do not resist any longer.

FRO. (*To Mariane*). Good Heavens, what ceremonies! Keep the ring, since the gentleman wishes it.

MAR. (*To Harpagon*). Not to put you into a passion, I shall keep it now, and I shall take another opportunity of returning it to you.<sup>46</sup>

SCENE XIII. — HARPAGON, MARIANE, ELISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, FROSINE, BRINDAVOINE.

BRIN. Sir, there is a man who wishes to speak to you.

HAR. Tell him that I am engaged, that he is to return at another time.

BRIN. He says that he brings you some money.

HAR. (*To Mariane*). I beg your pardon; I shall be back directly.

SCENE XIV. — HARPAGON, MARIANE, ELISE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, FROSINE, LA MERLUCHE.

MER. (*Running against Harpagon, whom he knocks down*). Sir . . .

HAR. Oh! I am killed!

CLE. What is it, father? have you hurt yourself?

HAR. The wretch has surely been bribed by my debtors to make me break my neck.

VAL. (*To Harpagon*). That will be nothing.

MER. (*To Harpagon*). I beg your pardon, Sir; I thought I was doing well in running quickly.

HAR. What have you come here for, you hangdog?

MER. To tell you that your two horses have lost their shoes.

HAR. Let them be taken to the farrier immediately.

CLE. While waiting for their being shod, I will do the honours of your house for you, father, and conduct this lady into the garden, whither I shall have the refreshments brought.

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<sup>46</sup> In an Italian farce, *le Case svaligiate* (the robbed house), it is a servant who acts in the same way as Cléante; but Molière has made the scene more comical by letting the son give the ring in his father's name.

## SCENE XV.—HARPAGON, VALÈRE.

HAR. Valère, keep your eye a little on this, and take care, I pray you, to save as much of it as you can, to send back to the tradespeople.

VAL. I know.

HAR. (*Alone*). O, impertinent son! do you mean to ruin me?

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ACT IV.

## SCENE I.—CLÉANTE, MARIANE, ELISE, FROSINE.

CLE. Let us go in here; we shall be much better. There is no suspicious person near us now, and we can converse freely.

EL. Yes, Madam, my brother has confided to me the affection which he feels for you. I am aware of the grief and unpleasantness which such obstacles are capable of causing; and it is, I assure you, with the utmost tenderness that I interest myself in your adventure.

MAR. It is a sweet consolation to see some one like you in one's interest; and I implore you, Madam, always to reserve for me this generous friendship, so capable of alleviating the cruelties of fortune.

FRO. You are, upon my word, both unlucky people, in not having warned me before this of your affair. I would, no doubt, have warded off this uneasiness from you, and not have carried matters so far as they now are.

CLE. Whose fault is it? It is my evil destiny that has willed it so. But fair Mariane, what have you resolved to do?

MAR. Alas! am I able to make any resolutions? And, in the dependent position in which you see me, can I form aught else than wishes?

CLE. No other support in your heart for me than mere wishes? No strenuous pity? No helping kindness? No energetic affection?

MAR. What can I say to you? Put yourself in my place, and see what I can do. Advise, command yourself: I leave the matter to you; and I think you too rea-



sonable to wish to exact from me aught but what may be consistent with honour and decency.

CLE. Alas! to what strait do you reduce me by driving me back to what the annoying dictates of a rigorous honour and a scrupulous decency only will permit?

MAR. But what would you have me to do? Even if I could forego the many scruples to which my sex compels me, I have some consideration for my mother. She has always brought me up with the utmost tenderness, and I could not make up my mind to cause her any displeasure. Treat, transact with her; use all your means to gain her mind. You may say and do whatever you like, I give you full power; and if nothing is wanting but to declare myself in your favour, I am willing, myself, to make to her the avowal of all that I feel for you.<sup>47</sup>

CLE. Frosine, dear Frosine, will you try to serve us?

FRO. Upon my word, need you ask? I should like it with all my heart. You know that, naturally, I am kind-hearted enough. Heaven has not given me a heart of iron, and I have only too much inclination for rendering little services when I see people who love each other in all decency and honour. What can we do in this matter?

CLE. Pray consider a little.

MAR. Give us some advice.

EL. Invent some means of undoing what you have done.

FRO. That is difficult enough. (*To Mariane*). As for your mother, she is not altogether unreasonable, and we might perhaps prevail upon her and induce her to transfer to the son the gift which she wished to make to the father. (*To Cléante*). But the mischief in it is, that your father is your father.

CLE. Of course.

FRO. I mean that he will bear malice if he finds that he is refused, and that he will not be of a mind afterwards to give his consent to your marriage. To do well, the refusal ought to come from himself, and she ought to try, by some means, to inspire him with a disgust towards her.

CLE. You are right.

FRO. Yes I am right; I know that well enough. That

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<sup>47</sup> Mariane's speech, according to M. Génin, is written in blank verse.

is what is wanted, but how the deuce can we find the means? Stop! Suppose we had some woman a little advanced in age who had my talent, and acted sufficiently well to counterfeit a lady of quality, by the help of a retinue made up in haste, and with an eccentric name of a marchioness or a viscountess, whom we will suppose to come from Lower Brittany, I would have skill enough to make your father believe that she was a person possessed of a hundred thousand crowns in ready money, besides her houses; that she was distractedly enamoured of him, and had so set her mind upon being his wife, that she would make all her property over to him by marriage-contract. I do not doubt that he would lend an ear to this proposal. For, after all, he loves you much, I know it, but he loves money a little more; and when, dazzled with this bait, he had once given his consent in what concerns you, it would matter very little if he were afterwards disabused, when he wished to see more clearly into the property of our marchioness.

CLE. All this is very well conceived.

FRO. Let me manage. I just recollect one of my friends who will suit us.

CLE. Be assured of my gratitude, Frosine, if you carry out this matter. But, charming Mariane, let us begin, I pray you, by gaining over your mother; it is doing much, at any rate, to break off this match. Make every possible effort on your part, I entreat you. Employ all the power which her tenderness for you gives you over her. Show her unreservedly the eloquent graces, the all-powerful charms, with which Heaven has endowed your eyes and your lips; and please do not overlook any of these tender words, of these sweet prayers, and of these winning caresses to which, I am persuaded, nothing can be refused.

MAR. I will do my best, and forget nothing.

SCENE II.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, MARIANE, ELISE,  
FROSINE.

HAR. (*Aside, without being seen*). Hey day! my son kisses the hand of his intended stepmother; and his intended stepmother does not seem to take it much amiss! Can there be any mystery underneath this?

EL. Here is my father.

HAR. The carriage is quite ready; you can start as soon as you like.

CLE. Since you are not going, father, permit me to escort them.

HAR. No: remain here. They will do well enough by themselves, and I want you.

SCENE III.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE.

HAR. Now, tell me, apart from becoming your stepmother, what think you of this lady?

CLE. What do I think of her?

HAR. Yes, of her air, of her figure, of her beauty, of her mind?

CLE. So, so.

HAR. That is no answer.

CLE. To speak to you candidly, I have not found her what I expected. Her air is that of a downright coquette, her figure is sufficiently awkward, her beauty very so-so, and her mind very ordinary. Do not think, father, that this is said to give you a distaste to her; for, stepmother for stepmother, I would as soon have her as any other.

HAR. You said to her just now, however . . .

CLE. I have said some sweet nothings to her in your name, but it was to please you.

HAR. So much so, that you would not feel any inclination towards her?

CLE. I? not at all.

HAR. I am sorry for it; for it does away with an idea that came into my head. In seeing her here, I have reflected upon my age; and I thought that people might find something to cavil at in seeing me marry so young a girl. This consideration has made me abandon the plan; and as I have made the demand of her hand, and am engaged to her by my word, I would have given her to you, had it not been for the aversion which you show.

CLE. To me?

HAR. To you.

CLE. In marriage?

HAR. In marriage.

CLE. Listen. It is true that she is not much to my

taste ; but to please you, father, I would make up my mind to marry her, if you wish it.

HAR. I, I am more reasonable than you give me credit for. I will not force your inclination.

CLE. Pardon me ; I will make this effort for your sake.

HAR. No, no. No marriage can be happy where there is no inclination.

CLE. Perhaps it will come afterwards, father ; they say that love is often the fruit of wedlock.

HAR. No. From the side of the man, one must not risk such a thing ; it generally brings grievous consequences, to which I do not care to commit myself. Had you felt any inclination for her, it would have been a different thing ; I should have made you marry her instead of me ; but, that not being the case, I will follow up my first plan, and marry her myself.

CLE. Well ! father, since matters are so, I must lay open my heart to you ; I must reveal our secret to you. The truth is, I love her, since, on a certain day, I saw her walking ; that my plan was, a short while ago, to ask her to become my wife, and that nothing restrained me but the declaration of your sentiments, and the fear of displeasing you.

HAR. Have you paid her any visits ?<sup>48</sup>

CLE. Yes, father.

HAR. Many times ?

CLE. Just enough, considering the time of our acquaintance.

HAR. Have you been well received ?

CLE. Very well, indeed, but without her knowing who I was ; and that is what just now caused the surprise of Mariane.

HAR. Have you declared your passion to her, and the design you had to marry her ?

CLE. Undoubtedly ; and I even made some overtures to her mother about it.

HAR. Has she listened to your proposal for her daughter ?

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<sup>48</sup> In the original Harpagon who, until now, has "thee and thoued" his son, begins to employ here "you."

CLE. Yes, very civilly.

HAR. And does the girl much reciprocate your love?

CLE. If I am to believe appearances, I flatter myself, father, that she has some affection for me.

HAR. (*Softly, to himself*). I am glad to have found out such a secret; that is just what I wished. (*Aloud*). Hark you, my son, do you know what you will have to do. You must think, if you please, of getting rid of your love, of ceasing from all pursuit of a person whom I intended for myself, and of marrying shortly the one who has been destined for you.<sup>49</sup>

CLE. So, father; it is thus that you trick me! Well! since matters have come to this pass, I declare to you, that I will not get rid of my love for Mariane; that there is nothing from which I shall shrink to dispute with you her possession; and that, if you have the consent of a mother on your side, I have other resources, perhaps, which will combat on mine.

HAR. What, hang-dog, you have the audacity to poach on my preserves.

CLE. It is you that are poaching on mine. I am the first comer.

HAR. Am I not your father, and do you not owe me respect?

CLE. This is not a matter in which a child is obliged to defer to his father, and love is no respecter of persons.

HAR. I will make you respect me well enough with some sound cudgel-blows.

CLE. All your threats will do nothing.

HAR. You shall renounce Mariane.

CLE. I shall do nothing of the kind.

HAR. Give me a stick immediately.

SCENE IV.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE, MASTER JACQUES.

JAC. Eh, eh, eh, gentlemen, what is all this? what are you thinking about?

CLE. I do not care a straw.

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<sup>49</sup> This scene of a father, rival of his son, says Voltaire, has also been treated by Racine, in his tragedy of *Mithridate*; but Racine caused tears to be shed, in representing the amorous weakness of a great king; whilst Molière has shown the ridiculous affection of an old miser.

JAC. (*To Cléante*). Come, Sir, gently.

HAR. To speak to me with such impertinence !

JAC. (*To Harpagon*). Pray Sir, pray !

CLE. I will not bate a jot.

JAC. (*To Cléante*). Eh what ! to your father ?

HAR. Let me alone.

JAC. (*To Harpagon*). What ! to your son ? I could overlook it to myself.

HAR. I will make yourself, Master Jacques, judge in this affair, to show you that I am in the right.

JAC. I consent. (*To Cléante*). Get a little farther away.

HAR. I love a girl whom I wish to marry ; and the hang-dog has the insolence to love her also, and to aspire to her hand in spite of my commands.<sup>60</sup>

JAC. He is wrong there.

HAR. Is it not a dreadful thing for a son to wish to enter into rivalry with his father ? and ought he not, out of respect, to abstain from meddling with my inclinations ?

JAC. You are right. Let me speak to him, while you remain here.

CLE. (*To Master Jacques, who is approaching him*). Well ! yes, since he chooses you as judge, I shall not draw back ; it matters not to me who it may be ; and I am willing to refer to you, Master Jacques, in this our quarrel.

JAC. You do me much honour.

CLE. I am smitten with a young girl who returns my affection, and tenderly accepts the offer of my love ; and my father takes it into his head to come and trouble our passion, by asking for her hand.

JAC. He is assuredly wrong.

CLE. Is he not ashamed at his age to think of marrying ? Does it still become him to be in love, and should he not leave this pastime to young people ?

JAC. You are right. He is only jesting. Let me speak a few words to him. (*To Harpagon*). Well ! your son

<sup>60</sup> Master Jacques, who has been so badly rewarded for his love of truth in the fifth scene of the third act, adopts here another line of conduct which will turn out still worse for him.

is not so strange as you make him out, and he is amenable to reason. He says that he knows the respect which he owes you, that he was only carried away by momentary warmth; and that he will not refuse to submit to your pleasure, provided you will treat him better than you do, and give him some one for a wife with whom he shall have reason to be satisfied.

HAR. Ah! tell him, Master Jacques, that, if he looks at it in that way, he may expect everything of me and that, except Mariane, I leave him free to choose whom he likes.

JAC. Let me manage it. (*To Cléante*). Well! your father is not so unreasonable as you make him out; and he has shown me that it was your violence that made him angry; that he objects only to your behaviour; and that he will be very much disposed to grant you what you wish, provided you shall do things gently, and show him the deference, the respect, and the submission which a son owes to his father.

CLE. Ah! Master Jacques, you may assure him that if he grants me Mariane, he will always find me the most submissive of beings, and that I never shall do anything except what he wishes.

JAC. (*To Harpagon*). That is done. He consents to what you say.

HAR. Then things will go on in the best possible way.

JAC. (*To Cléante*). Everything is arranged; he is satisfied with your promises!

CLE. Heaven be praised!

JAC. Gentlemen, you have but to talk the matter over: you are agreed now, and you were going to quarrel for want of understanding each other.

CLE. My dear Master Jacques, I shall be obliged to you all my life.

JAC. Do not mention it, Sir.

HAR. You have given me great pleasure, Master Jacques; and that deserves a reward. (*Harpagon fumbles in his pockets; Master Jacques holds out his hand, but Harpagon only draws out his handkerchief*). Go now, I shall remember this, I assure you.

JAC. I kiss your hands.

## SCENE V.—HARPAGON, CLÉANTE.

CLE. I ask your pardon, father, for the passion which I have displayed.

HAR. Never mind.

CLE. I assure you that I regret it exceedingly.

HAR. And I, I have the greatest delight in seeing you reasonable.

CLE. How good of you to forget my fault so quickly!

HAR. The faults of children are easily forgotten, when they return to their duty.

CLE. What! not retain any resentment for all my extravagance?

HAR. You compel me to it, by the submission and the respect to which you pledge yourself.

CLE. I promise you, father, that I shall carry the recollection of your goodness to my grave with me.

HAR. And I, I promise you, that you may obtain anything from me.

CLE. Ah! father, I ask for nothing more; you have given me enough by giving me Mariane.

HAR. How!

CLE. I say, father, that I am too well pleased with you, and that I find everything in your kindness in giving me Mariane.

HAR. Who says anything to you of giving you Mariane?

CLE. You, father.

HAR. I!

CLE. Undoubtedly.

HAR. What! it is you who have promised to renounce her.

CLE. I renounce her!

HAR. Yes.

CLE. Not at all.

HAR. You have not given up your pretensions to her?

CLE. On the contrary, I am more determined than ever upon them.

HAR. What! hang-dog, you begin afresh?

CLE. Nothing can change my mind.

HAR. Let me get at you, wretch.

CLE. Do what you like.



HAR. I forbid you ever to come within my sight.

CLE. All right.

HAR. I abandon you.

CLE. Abandon as much as you like.

HAR. I disown you as my son.

CLE. Be it so.

HAR. I disinherit you.

CLE. Whatever you please.

HAR. And I give you my malediction.

CLE. I want none of your gifts.<sup>67</sup>

SCENE VI.—CLÉANTE, LA FLÈCHE.

LA FL. (*Coming from the garden with a casket under his arm*). Ah! Sir, I find you in the nick of time! Follow me quickly.

CLE. What is the matter?

LA FL. Follow me, I tell you; we are all right.

CLE. How?

LA FL. Here is your affair.

CLE. What?

LA FL. I keep my eye upon this the whole day.

CLE. What is it?

LA FL. The treasure of your father, which I have laid hands on.

CLE. How did you manage?


LA FL. You shall know all. Let us fly; I hear his shouts.

SCENE VII.—HARPAGON, *aloud, shouting in the garden, rushing in without his hat.*

Thieves! Thieves! Murder! Stop the murderers! Justice! just Heaven! I am lost! I am killed; they have cut my throat; they have stolen my money. Who can it be? What has become of him? Where is he? Where does he hide himself? What shall I do to find him? Where to run? Where not to run? Is he not there? Who is it? Stop! (*To himself, pressing his own arm*).

<sup>67</sup> Several of Molière's commentators have observed that Cléante's impudent answers only prove the truth of the saying, "like father like son," and that a miserly father must produce such a disobedient child.

Give me back my money, scoundrel . . . Ah, it is myself! My senses are wandering, and I do not know where I am, who I am, and what I am doing. Alas! my poor money! my poor money! my dearest friend, they have deprived me of you; and as you are taken from me, I have lost my support, my consolation, my joy: everything is at an end for me, and I have nothing more to do in this world. Without you, life becomes impossible. It is all over; I am utterly exhausted; I am dying; I am dead; I am buried. Is there no one who will resuscitate me by giving me back my beloved money, or by telling me who has taken it? Eh! what do you say? There is no one. Whoever he is who has done this, he must have carefully watched his hour; and he has just chosen the time when I was speaking to my wretch of a son. Let us go. I must inform the authorities, and have the whole of my household examined; female-servants, male-servants, son, daughter, and myself also. What an assembly! I do not look at any one whom I do not suspect, and every one seems to be my thief. Eh! what are they speaking of yonder? of him who has robbed me? What noise is that up there? Is it my thief who is there? For pity's sake, if you know any news of my thief, I implore you to tell me. Is he not hidden among you? They are all looking at me, and laughing in my face. You will see that they have, no doubt, a share in the robbery. Come quickly, magistrates, police-officers, provosts, judges, instruments of torture, gibbets, and executioners. I will have the whole world hanged; and if I do not recover my money, I will hang myself afterwards.



## ACT V.

## SCENE I.—HARPAGON, A MAGISTRATE.

MAG. Let me manage it; I know my business, thank Heaven. To-day is not the first time that I am engaged in discovering robberies; and I should like to have as many bags of a thousand francs as I have been instrumental in hanging people.

HAR. Every magistrate must have an interest in taking this matter in hand; and, if they do not enable me to find my money again, I shall demand justice upon the authorities themselves.

MAG. We must take all the needful steps. You said that there was in this box . . .

HAR. Ten thousand crowns in cash.

MAG. Ten thousand crowns!

HAR. (*Crying*). Ten thousand crowns.

MAG. The robbery is considerable!

HAR. There is no punishment great enough for the enormity of this crime; and, if it remain unpunished, the most sacred things are no longer safe.

MAG. And in what coin was this sum?

HAR. In good louis d'or and pistoles without a flaw.<sup>68</sup>

MAG. Whom do you suspect of this robbery?

HAR. Every one; and I wish you to arrest the town and the suburbs.

MAG. You must, if you will take my opinion, scare nobody, but endeavour gently to collect some proofs, in order to act afterwards, by severer process, to recover the coin which has been taken from you.

SCENE II.—HARPAGON, A MAGISTRATE, MASTER JACQUES.

JAC. (*At the far end of the stage, turning towards the door by which he entered*). I am coming back directly. Let its throat be cut immediately; let them singe me its feet; let them put it in boiling water, and let them hang it from the ceiling.

HAR. Who? he who has robbed me?

JAC. I am speaking of a sucking pig which your steward has just sent in, and I wish to dress it for you after my own fancy.

HAR. There is no question of that; and this is a gentleman to whom you must speak of something else.

MAG. (*To Master Jacques*). Do not be alarmed. I am

<sup>68</sup> In French "pistoles without a flaw," are *pistoles bien trébuchantes*. The *trébuchet* was a small and very sensitive pair of scales; hence coin, which had not its full weight, was not called *trébuchant*.

not the man to cause any scandal, and matters will be managed in a gentle way.

JAC. Is this gentleman of the supper party?

MAG. In this case, dear friend, you must hide nothing from your master.

JAC. Upon my word, Sir, I shall show all I know, and I shall treat you in the best possible way.

HAR. That is not the question.

JAC. If I do not dish you up something as good as I could wish, it is the fault of your Master Steward, who has clipped my wings with the scissors of his economy.

HAR. You wretch! it concerns something else than the supper; and I wish you to give me some information respecting the money that has been stolen from me.

JAC. They have stolen some money from you?

HAR. Yes, you scoundrel; and I shall have you hanged if you do not give it me back again.

MAG. (*To Harpagon*). Good Heavens! do not ill-use him. I perceive by his face that he is an honest man, and that, without having him locked up, he will inform you of what you wish to know. Yes, my friend, if you confess the matter to me, no harm will come to you, and you will be suitably rewarded by your master. They have robbed him of his money to-day; and it is scarcely possible that you do not know something of the matter.

X JAC. (*Aside to himself*). This is just what I wish, in order to revenge myself on our steward. Since he has set foot in this house, he is the favourite; his counsels are the only ones listened to; and the cudgel-blows, just now received, are also sticking in my throat.

HAR. What are you muttering to yourself about?

MAG. (*To Harpagon*). Leave him alone. He is preparing to give you satisfaction; and I told you that he was an honest man.

JAC. If you wish me to tell you things as they are, Sir, I believe that it is your dear steward who has done this.

HAR. Valère!

JAC. Yes.

HAR. He! who seemed so faithful to me?

JAC. Himself. I believe that he is the one who robbed you.

HAR. And upon what do you base your belief?

JAC. Upon what?

HAR. Yes.

JAC. I believe it . . . because I believe it.

MAG. But it is necessary to mention the evidence which you have.

HAR. Have you seen him hang about the spot where I had put my money?

JAC. Yes, indeed. Where was your money?

HAR. In the garden.

JAC. That is just where I have seen him hanging about, in the garden. And what was this money in?

HAR. In a cash-box.

JAC. The very thing. I have seen him with a cash-box.

HAR. And this cash-box, how is it made? I shall soon see if it be mine.

JAC. How is it made?

HAR. Yes.

JAC. It is made . . . it is made like a cash-box.

MAG. Of course. But just describe it a little, that I may see.

JAC. It is a large cash-box.

HAR. The one that has been stolen from me is a small one.

JAC. Eh! Yes, it is small, if you take it in that way; but I call it large on account of its contents.

MAG. And what colour is it?

JAC. What colour?

MAG. Yes.

JAC. It is of a colour . . . of a certain colour. Could you not help me to say?

HAR. Ah!

JAC. Is it not red?

HAR. No, grey.

JAC. Yes, that is it, greyish-red; that is what I meant.

HAR. There is no longer any doubt; it is the one assuredly. Write down, Sir, write down his deposition. Heavens! whom is one to trust henceforth! One must no longer swear to anything; and I verily believe, after this, that I am the man to rob myself.

JAC. (*To Harpagon*). He is just coming back, Sir. Do not tell him, at least, that it is I who have revealed all this.

SCENE III.—HARPAGON, MAGISTRATE, VALÈRE, MASTER JACQUES.

HAR. Come near, and confess to the blackest deed, the most horrible crime that ever was committed.

VAL. What do you wish, Sir?

HAR. How, wretch! you do not blush for your crime.

VAL. Of what crime are you talking?

HAR. Of what crime am I talking, infamous monster! as if you did not know what I mean! It is in vain that you attempt to disguise it; the thing has been discovered, and I have just learned all. How could you thus abuse my kindness, and introduce yourself into my house expressly to betray me, to play me a trick of that sort?

VAL. Since everything has been revealed to you, Sir, I will not prevaricate, and deny the matter to you.

JAC. (*Aside*). Oh! Oh! could I unconsciously have guessed aright!

VAL. It was my intention to speak to you about it, and I wished to wait for a favourable opportunity; but, since matters are so, I implore you not to be angry, and to be willing to listen to my motives.

HAR. And what pretty motives can you advance, infamous thief?

VAL. Ah! Sir, I have not deserved these names. It is true that I have committed an offence against you; but after all, the fault is pardonable.

HAR. How! pardonable? A trap, a murder like that.

VAL. For pity's sake, do not get angry. When you have heard me, you will see that the harm is not so great as you make it.

HAR. The harm is not so great as I make it! What! my blood, my very heart,<sup>55</sup> hang-dog!

VAL. Your blood, Sir, has not fallen into bad hands. I am of a rank not to do it any injury; and there is nothing in all this but what I can easily repair.

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<sup>55</sup> The original has *entrailles*, bowels.

HAR. That is what I intend, and that you should restore to me what you have robbed me of.

VAL. Your honour shall be amply satisfied, Sir.

HAR. There is no question of honour in it. But tell me, who has driven you to such a deed?

VAL. Alas! need you ask me?

HAR. Yes, indeed, I do ask you.

VAL. A god who carries his excuse for all he makes people do. Love.

HAR. Love?

VAL. Yes.

HAR. A pretty love, a pretty love, upon my word! the love for my gold pieces!

VAL. No, Sir, it is not your wealth that has tempted me; it is not that which has dazzled me; and I protest that I have not the slightest design upon your property, provided you leave me that which I have got.

HAR. No, by all the devils I shall not leave it to you. But see what insolence to wish to keep that of which he has robbed me!

VAL. Do you call that robbery?

HAR. If I call it a robbery? a treasure like that!

VAL. It is a treasure, that is true, and the most precious which you have got, no doubt; but it would not be losing it to leave it to me. I ask you for it on my knees, this treasure full of charms? and to do right, you should grant it to me.

HAR. I shall do nothing of the kind. What does it all mean?

VAL. We have pledged our faith to each other, and have sworn never to part.

HAR. The oath is admirable, and the promise rather funny.

VAL. Yes, we have bound ourselves to be all in all to each other for ever.

HAR. I shall hinder you from it, I assure you.

VAL. Nothing but death shall separate us.

HAR. It is being devilishly enamoured of my money.

VAL. I have told you already, Sir, that interest did not urge me to do what I have done. My heart did not act from the motives which you imagine; a nobler one inspired me with this resolution.

HAR. You shall see that it is from Christian charity that he covets my property! But I shall look to that; and the law will give me satisfaction for all this, you bare-faced rogue.

VAL. You shall act as you like, and I am ready to bear all the violence you please; but I implore you to believe, at least, that if harm has been done, I only am to be blamed, and that in all this, your daughter is in nowise culpable.

HAR. Indeed, I believe you! it would be very strange if my daughter had had a part in this crime. But I will have my property back again, and I will have you confess where you have carried it away to.

VAL. I? I have not carried it away at all. It is still in your house.

HAR. (*Aside*). O! my beloved cash-box! (*Aloud*). Then it has not gone out of my house?

VAL. No, sir.

HAR. Just tell me that you have not made free with it?

VAL. I make free with it! Ah! you wrong us both; and it is with a wholly pure and respectable ardour that I burn.

HAR. (*Aside*). Burn for my cash-box!

VAL. I would sooner die than show her any offensive thought: she is too prudent and honourable for that.

HAR. (*Aside*). My cash-box too honourable!

VAL. All my wishes are confined to enjoy the sight of her; and nothing criminal has profaned the passion with which her beautiful eyes have inspired me.

HAR. (*Aside*). The beautiful eyes of my cash-box! He speaks of her as a lover speaks of his mistress.<sup>64</sup>

VAL. Mistress Claude, Sir, knows the truth of this affair; and she can testify to it.

HAR. What! my servant is an accomplice in the matter?

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<sup>64</sup> This scene must necessarily lose much of its comic effect in translation, for the obvious reason that in French the difference between *cassette* and *filles*, "cash-box" and "daughter," is not so palpable to the ear, the feminine adjective and pronoun being used for both; while in English such is not the case, the one taking "it" as its pronoun, and the other "she."



VAL. Yes, Sir; she was a witness to our engagement; and it is after having known the honourable intent of my passion, that she has assisted me in persuading your daughter to plight her troth, and receive mine.

HAR. (*Aside*). He? Does the fear of justice make him rave? (*To Valère*). What means all this gibberish about my daughter?

VAL. I say, Sir, that I have had all the trouble in the world to bring her modesty to consent to what my love wished for.

HAR. The modesty of whom?

VAL. Of your daughter; and it is only yesterday that she could make up her mind to sign a mutual promise of marriage.

HAR. My daughter has signed you a promise of marriage?

VAL. Yes, Sir, as I have signed her one.

HAR. O, Heaven! another disgrace!<sup>65</sup>

JAC. (*To the Magistrate*). Write, Sir, write.

HAR. More harm! additional despair!<sup>66</sup> (*To the Magistrate*). Come, Sir, do the duty of your office; and draw up for him his indictment as a felon and a suborner.

JAC. As a felon and a suborner.

VAL. These are names that do not belong to me; and when people shall know who I am. . . .

SCENE IV.—HARPAGON, ELISE, MARIANE, VALÈRE, FROSINE, MASTER JACQUES, A MAGISTRATE.

HAR. Ah! graceless child! daughter unworthy of a father like me! it is thus that you carry out the lessons which I have given you? You allow yourself to become smitten with an infamous thief; and you pledge him your troth without my consent! But you shall both find out your mistake. (*To Elise*). Four strong walls will answer for your conduct; (*to Valère*), and a good gibbet will give me satisfaction for your audacity.

<sup>65</sup> In the original *rengrègement de mal*. *Rengrègement* is the comparative of the old French word *greigneur*, great.

<sup>66</sup> In Plautus, *Aulularia* (Act v., Scene 3), Euclio, on hearing the truth from Lyconides, exclaims also, "I'm undone entirely; so very many misfortunes unite themselves for my undoing."

VAL. It will not be your passion that shall judge this matter; and I shall get at least a hearing before being condemned.

HAR. I have made a mistake in saying a gibbet; and you shall be broken alive on the wheel.

EL. (*At Harpagon's knees*). Ah! father, show a little more humanity in your feelings, I beseech you, and do not push matters with the utmost violence of paternal power. Do not give way to the first movements of your passion, and give yourself time to consider what you do. Take the trouble to know better him whom you believe to have offended you. He is quite different from what he appears in your eyes; and you will find it less strange that I have given myself to him, when you know that, had it not been for him, you would long ago have had me no longer. Yes, father, it is he who saved me from the great peril I was in when I fell into the water, and to whom you owe the life of that very daughter, who . . .

HAR. All that is nothing; and it would have been much better for me, had he allowed you to be drowned, than to do what he has done.

EL. I implore you, father, by your paternal love, to . . .

HAR. No, no; I will hear nothing, and justice must have its course.

JAC. You shall pay me my cudgel-blows.

FRO. (*Aside*). What strange confusion is this!

SCENE V.—ANSELME, HARPAGON, ELISE, MARIANE,  
FROSINE, VALÈRE, MAGISTRATE, MASTER JACQUES.

AN. What is the matter, Mr. Harpagon? I find you quite upset.

HAR. Ah! Mr. Anselme, I am the most unfortunate of men; and there is a great deal of trouble and disorder connected with the contract which you have come to sign! I am attacked in my property, I am attacked in my honour; and behold a wretch, a scoundrel who has violated the most sacred rights; who has introduced himself into my house as a servant to rob me of my money, and to tamper with my daughter.

VAL. Who is thinking of your money, of which you make such a cock-and-bull story?

HAR. Yes, they have given each other a promise of marriage. This insult concerns you, Mr. Anselme, and it is you who ought to take up the cudgels against him, and employ all the rigours of the law, to revenge yourself upon him for his insolence.

ANS. It is not my intention to make any one marry me by compulsion, and to lay claim to a heart which has already pledged itself; but, as far as your interests are concerned, I am ready to espouse them, as if they were my own.

HAR. This gentleman here is an honest magistrate who will forget nothing, from what he has said to me, of the duties of his office. (*To the Magistrate*). Charge him, Sir, in the right fashion, and make matters very criminal.

VAL. I do not see what crime can be made out against me of the affection which I entertain for your daughter, and to what punishment you think I can be condemned on account of our engagement when it shall be known who I am . . .

HAR. I do not care about any of these stories; in our days the world is full of these assumed noblemen; of these impostors, who take advantage of their obscurity, and with the greatest insolence adopt the first illustrious name which comes into their head.

VAL. I would have you to know that I am too upright to deck myself with anything that does not belong to me; and that all Naples can bear testimony to my birth.

ANS. Gently! take care what you are going to say. You run a greater risk in this than you think; you are speaking before a man to whom all Naples is known, and who can easily see through her story.

VAL. (*Proudly putting his hat on*). I am not the man to fear anything; and if you know Naples, you know who was Don Thomas d'Alburci.

ANS. No doubt, I know; and few people have known him better than I.

HAR. I do not care for Don Thomas nor Don Martin.  
(*Seeing two candles burning, blows one out.*<sup>67</sup>)

<sup>67</sup> There is a traditionary stage play going on during this scene. Whilst this conversation is taking place, Harpagon puts out one of the candles which are on the table; Jacques lights it again; Harpagon blows it out

ANS. Pray let him speak ; we shall hear what he means to say about him.

VAL. I mean to say that to him I owe my birth.

ANS. To him ?

VAL. Yes.

ANS. Come ; you are jesting. Invent some other story which may succeed better, and do not attempt to save yourself by this imposture.

VAL. Learn to speak differently. It is not an imposture, and I advance nothing but what can be easily proved by me.

ANS. What ! you dare call yourself the son of Don Thomas d'Alburci ?

VAL. Yes, I dare ; and I am prepared to maintain this truth against any one.

ANS. The audacity is marvellous ! Learn to your confusion, that it is sixteen years at least since the man you speak of perished at sea with his wife and children, while endeavouring to save their lives from the cruel persecutions which accompanied the troubles at Naples, and which caused the exile of several noble families.<sup>68</sup>

VAL. Yes ; but learn, to your confusion, you, that his son, seven years of age, with a servant, was saved from the wreck by a Spanish vessel, and that this son, who was saved, is the person who spoke to you. Learn that the captain of that ship, pitying my misfortune, conceived a friendship for me ; that he had me educated as his own son, and that I was trained to the profession of arms ever since I was old enough ; that I have learned lately that my father is not dead, as I always believed ; that passing through here to go in search of him, an accident, arranged by Heaven, brought me into contact with the charming Elise ; that the sight of her made me a slave to her beauty, and that the violence of my passion and the harshness of

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anew, and holds it in his hand, but whilst he is listening, the servant rekindles it. The miser sees the lighted candle, while unfolding his arms ; he extinguishes it anew, and puts it in his breeches' pocket, where Jacques relights it again, and where it is afresh discovered by Harpagon. Some commentators of Molière's have blamed this by-play.

<sup>68</sup> It is possible that Molière meant to speak here of Masaniello's rebellion at Naples, in the years 1647 and 1648, and which agrees, in the main, with the age of the different personages.

her father made me resolve to introduce myself into his house, and to send some one else in quest of my parents.

ANS. But what other proofs than your words can guarantee to us that this is not a fable based upon truth?

VAL. The Spanish captain; a ruby seal which belonged to my father; an agate bracelet which my mother had on her arm; old Pedro, the servant, who was saved with me from the wreck.

MAR. Alas! to your words I can answer, I, that you are not imposing, and all that you say shows me clearly that you are my brother

VAL. You, my sister!

MAR. Yes. My heart was touched the moment you opened your lips; and our mother, who will be overjoyed at seeing you, has thousands of times related to me the misfortunes of our family. Heaven also permitted us not to perish in this dreadful shipwreck; but our lives were saved only at the cost of our liberty; and they were pirates that picked us up, my mother and me, on a plank of our vessel. After ten years of slavery, a happy accident regained for us our freedom; and we returned to Naples, where we found all our property sold, without being able to trace any news of our father. We then travelled to Genoa, whither my mother went to pick up some miserable remains of an inheritance of which she had been despoiled; and thence, flying from the barbarous injustice of her relatives, she came hither, where she has almost barely been able to drag on her life.

ANS. Oh Heaven! how great is the evidence of thy power! and how well showest thou that it belongs only to thee to perform miracles! Embrace me, my children, and share your joys with those of your father.

VAL. You are our father?

MAR. It is you whom my mother has so much bewailed.

ANS. Yes, my daughter, yes, my son; I am Don Thomas d'Alburci, whom Heaven saved from the waves, with all the money which he carried with him, and who, believing you all dead during more than sixteen years, prepared, after long journeying, to seek, in the union with a gentle and discreet girl, the consolation of a new family. The little safety which I found for my life in Naples,

has made me for ever abandon the idea of returning ; and having found means to sell all that I possessed there, I became used to this place, where, under the name of Anselme, I wished to get rid of the sorrows of this other name, which caused me so many misfortunes.

HAR. (*To Anselme*). Is this your son ?

ANS. Yes.

HAR. Then I hold you responsible for paying me ten thousand crowns of which he has robbed me.

ANS. He has robbed you !

HAR. Himself.

VAL. Who tells you this ?

HAR. Master Jacques.

VAL. (*To Master Jacques*). Is it you who say this ?

JACQ. You see that I say nothing.

HAR. Yes. There is the Magistrate who has received his deposition.

VAL. Can you believe me capable of so base an action ?

HAR. Capable or not capable, I want my money back again.

SCENE VI.—HARPAGON, ANSELME, ELISE, MARIANE, CLÉANTE, VALÈRE, FROSINE, A MAGISTRATE, MASTER JACQUES, LA FLÈCHE.

CLE. Do not worry yourself any longer, father, and accuse no one. I have discovered tidings of your affair ; and I have come to tell you, that if you will make up your mind to let me marry Mariane, your money shall be returned to you.

HAR. Where is it ?

CLE. Do not grieve about that. It is in a spot for which I answer ; and everything depends upon me. It is for you to say what you resolve ; and you can choose, either to give me Mariane, or to lose your cash-box.

HAR. Has nothing been taken out ?

CLE. Nothing at all. Now make up your mind whether you will subscribe to this marriage, and join your consent to that of her mother, who leaves her free to choose between us two.

MAR. (*To Cléante*). But you do not know that this consent is no longer sufficient ; and that Heaven restores

to me not only a brother (*pointing to Valère*) but also (*pointing to Anselme*) a father, from whom you must obtain me.

ANS. Heaven has not restored me to you, my children, to go contrary to your desires. Mr. Harpagon, you are well aware that the choice of a young girl will fall upon the son rather than upon the father; come, do not oblige people to say what it is not necessary to hear; and consent, as well as I do, to this double match.

HAR. To be well advised, I must see my cash-box.

CLE. You shall see it safe and sound.

HAR. I have no money to give my children in marriage.

ANS. Well! I have some for them; do not let that trouble you.

HAR. Will you undertake to defray all the expenses of these two weddings?

ANS. Yes, I undertake it. Are you satisfied?

HAR. Yes, provided that you will order me a suit for the nuptials.

ANS. That is agreed. Let us go and rejoice in the happiness which this day brings us.

MAG. Hullo! gentlemen, hullo! Gently, if you please. Who is to pay for my writing?<sup>50</sup>

HAR. We have nothing to do with your writings.

MAG. Yes! but I do not pretend to have written for nothing.

HAR. (*Pointing to Master Jacques*). For your payment, there is a man of whom I make you a present; and you may hang him.

JAC. Alas! how must one act? I get cudgel-blows for speaking the truth; and they wish to hang me for telling a lie!

ANS. Mr. Harpagon, you must forgive him this imposture.

HAR. Will you pay the magistrate, then?

ANS. Be it so. Come let us go quickly to share our joy with your mother.

HAR. And I, to see my dear cash-box.

<sup>50</sup> It appears that in Molière's time the places of *commissaire* were bought; hence these magistrates were very liable to be bribed. Compare what Sganarelle says to one of them in *The School for Husbands* (Vol. I., Act iii., Scene 5).





MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC.

COMÉDIE-BALLET.

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MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC

A COMEDY-BALLET IN THREE ACTS.

*(THE ORIGINAL PARTLY IN PROSE AND PARTLY IN VERSE.)*

OCTOBER 6TH, 1669.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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THE whole of the first part of the year 1669 was occupied with *Tartuffe*. Only in the month of October of the same year, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, a new production of Molière, which was ordered for the king, and played on the 6th of that month at Chambord, saw the light. Molière and his troupe received 6000 livres for their acting of this play, which was represented at the theatre of the Palais-Royal, on the 15th of November of the same year, and was performed twenty times in succession. It was anew acted before the Court on the 6th of March of the following year. The idea of putting the hero of the comedy in the hands of a physician, to be cured in spite of himself, and making the first believe that he is going to be "treated as well as possible," whilst the latter thinks that he has to deal with a patient, is to be found in many of the early *fabliaux*; only the scene takes place between a priest, who imagines that he has to exorcise a man, whilst this one is a creditor who flatters himself that he is going to be paid. Later, a doctor or surgeon was put in the place of the priest. In the *Histoire générale des Larrons*, published at Lyons in 1639, a tale is told how a thief brought a draper's assistant to a certain surgeon. He had warned the latter beforehand that he should bring him a patient, and ran off with a piece of cloth which he had ordered in the name of the doctor, who, as well as his supposed patient, were endeavouring to explain the mistake under which each laboured. This trick had already been represented on the Théâtre du Marais, in 1661, by a certain Chevalier, in a farce in verse, *The Desolation of the Rogues about the Prohibition of Wearing Arms, or the Patients who are not ill*. In this farce, Guillot's master gives him a valuable ring, to borrow money upon. The servant entrusts the ring to a rascal, who gives it to one of his accomplices, dressed as a physician, the latter pretends to have been paid to cure Guillot, who refuses to place himself under his hands, and who is pursued by a great many apothecaries, armed with syringes.

Molière received the first hint of the scene in which Eraste persuades M. de Pourceaugnac that they are old friends, from a tale by Scarron, published in 1652, and called *Not to Believe what One Sees*. The scenes in which Pourceaugnac is pestered by Nérine, Lucette, and their children, and the flight of the Limousin gentleman, dressed as a woman are said to be found in an Italian farce, *The Disgraces of Harlequin*; but the date when this farce was first played is not known with any certainty.

It has been stated that Molière, in order to revenge himself upon a gentleman of Limoges who had insulted him, brought his caricature upon the

stage as M. de Pourceaugnac. But he must have met many such characters during his peregrinations, as a strolling player, in the provinces. M. de Pourceaugnac is, like M. de Sotenville, in *George Dandin*, a provincial gentleman; but the first is something of a lawyer, and is more easily gulled, though brimful of suspicion and antiquated prejudices. He is amusing by the very self-sufficiency which he displays in all his mishaps. His extravagant and farcical adventures divert the spectator, chiefly on account of the natural language of the different characters, and the racy humour and broad fun which pervade the whole comedy.

Molière attacks the doctors in this play; but he almost faithfully represents them and their language. The consultation of the two physicians is not exaggerated; they reason well, draw consequences, and explain the cause of the disease correctly; their remedies are not badly applied, but the misfortune is that Pourceaugnac is not mad, as they believe him to be. Hence all their arguments, cleverness, and pedantry only bring more to the light their egregious blunder.

Tradition asserts that Lulli once played the part of De Pourceaugnac. He was in disgrace with the king; and, as this disgrace had lasted for some time, he made an arrangement with Molière to assist him. When the curtain rose, it was announced that Molière had suddenly become indisposed; Lulli proposed to play the chief character, and his proposal was accepted by Louis XIV. Lulli played with much spirit and vivacity, but did not see the king unbend. When the scene with the apothecaries came on, Lulli, ran, skipped, leapt, frisked about, but all in vain, the *Grand Monarque* did not even smile. At last the wily Italian hit upon an inspiration. Pursued by his persecutors, he took a tremendous leap, and jumped right in the middle of a spinnet which stood in the orchestra, and which was smashed in a thousand pieces. He ran the risk of breaking his legs, but he was satisfied; he had seen the king laugh and applaud; he had heard the Court imitate the monarch; and he knew when he reappeared on the stage through the prompter's box, that he was anew re-established in the king's favour.

In the sixth volume of the translation of "Select Comedies by M. de Molière, London, 1732," this piece under the title of *Squire Lubberly*, is dedicated to the Right Honourable the Lady Mary Wortley Montague in the following words:—

MADAM,

If this TRANSLATION can be so happy as to please Your LADYSHIP, it is almost certain of the World's Applause: For Your fine Taste and distinguishing judgment are known so universally, that few or none (as fond as people are of cavilling) will dare find Fault with what is honoured by Your LADYSHIP's Approbation. But Your LADYSHIP's high Character would only seem a Proof of my Presumption in this Address, were it not remarkable that, with the *Happiest Genius* in the World, You have the *Best Good-Nature*, and can pardon the Faults of others with the same Facility that You write fine Things Your self.

It is no easy Task to preserve the Spirit and Humour of MOLIERE in a TRANSLATION that is almost Literal: This, however, has been my attempt, and if, in the general, I have succeeded, Your LADYSHIP, I assure myself, will excuse some few Mistakes.

I shall be no farther troublesome than to subscribe myself with the greatest respect that's possible,—MADAM, *Your Ladyship's most Obedient, and most humble Servant*,

THE TRANSLATOR.

Several English dramatists have imitated either the whole, or some of the scenes of Molière's play.

We first have to deal with Ravenscroft, (See Introductory Notice to *The Love-Tiff*, Vol. I., page 76), who in three of his plays, has made use of *M. de Pourceaugnac*. In his *Mamamouchi, or the Citizen turn'd Gentleman*, acted in 1671, a play chiefly taken from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Sir Simon Softhead is Pourceaugnac. In the *Careless Lovers*, a comedy acted at the Duke's Theatre, 1673, the scene in the fourth act, in which Mrs. Breedwell and Clapham bring in their children and pretend that they are the wives of De Boastado, is taken from the seventh and eighth scenes of the last act of the French comedy. In his play, Ravenscroft, in the Epistle, attacks Dryden, and says that the reason that they are continually falling out, is "that two of a trade can never agree," whilst, in the Prologue, he sneers at *Almansor* and *Love in a Nunnery*. In his *Canterbury Guests, or a Bargain Broken*, played at the Theatre Royal in 1694, Ravenscroft has reproduced the scene of the women and the children which he had introduced before in *The Careless Lovers*.

Crowne, in his *Country Wit* (See Introductory Notice to *The Sicilian*, Vol. II., page 336), has sketched a character, Sir Mannerly Shallow, which has evidently been inspired by *M. de Pourceaugnac*, although not literally followed. The English baronet exclaims—

"Well to Cumberland commend me for gentility,  
But to London for good breeding and civility;"

and is finally married to a porter's daughter. Ramble and Merry at times remind me of Eraste and Sbrigani, in Molière's comedy.

*M. de Pourceaugnac, Squire Trelooby*, was said to be translated by Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Walsh, with a prologue by Dr. Garth. It was first acted at the Theatre, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, March 20th, 1704. It was also acted Jan. 3d, 1734, under the title of *The Cornish Squire*.

Charles Shadwell brought out at Dublin in 1720, a farce called *The Plotting Lovers; or the Dismal Squire*, which is a free translation and condensation of *M. de Pourceaugnac* into one act.

Miller's *Mother-in-Law; or, the Doctor the Disease*, a comedy in five acts, in prose, was performed in the Haymarket Theatre on the 12th of February, 1734, and met with great success. The scene of it is laid in London, and the plot is compounded of two comedies of Molière, *M. de Pourceaugnac* and *The Hypochondriac*. The author, who was then in orders, dedicated his play to the Countess of Hertford, and stated in his dedication that his "Comedy . . . has not in it one indecent expression, or one immoral thought," and also "that Molière is properly the author of this play." He repeats these statements more emphatically in the Prologue, and harps on the same string in the Epilogue, where we also find a description of the dress of the ladies and gentlemen of those times. Mrs. Heron as Primrose (Toinette) states of the great dames, that

"In round-ear'd Colf, white Apron, and stuff gown,  
Your Lady Betties trip about the town;  
Whilst nice Sir Fopling, and his Brother Beaux,  
Transported, step into their Footmen's Clothes;  
Proud of the Oaken Club, and tuck'd up Hair,  
They then, first, really are what they appear."

*M. de Pourceaugnac* is called in Miller's play, "Looby Headpiece, nephew to Dr. Mummy;" Beaumont, the lover, is a mixture of Cléante, from *The Hypochondriac*, and of Sbrigani, from *M. de Pourceaugnac* which latter character is also partly filled up by Mrs. Primrose (Toi-

nette). The scene where M. de Pourceaugnac is in woman's clothes and the one between the two doctors and the supposed lunatic are the same in both plays; but Dr. Mummy, one of the consulting physicians, discovers that Looby is his nephew, who afterwards takes the character of Thomas Diafoirus, from *The Hypochondriac*. The greater part of *The Mother-in-Law* is taken from the latter comedy; Argan is Sir Credulous Hippius; Béralde becomes Heartwell; the elder Diafoirus, Dr. Mummy; M. Fleurant, Mr. Galleypot; M. Bonnefoi, Mr. Cranny, whilst Béliize; the second wife of Argan in the French comedy, is, in the English one, called Lady Hippius; the daughter Angélique becomes Belina, and Louison, the younger sister, is changed into Agnes.

Thomas Sheridan, the actor, wrote *Captain O'Blunder; or the Brave Irishman*, a farce in one act, performed at the Theatre, Goodman's Field's on the 31st of January, 1746, and which is nearly all borrowed from *M. de Pourceaugnac*, who for the nonce is turned into an Irishman. The consultation with the doctors is there; the Captain kills a Frenchman in a duel, and is obliged to fly, and Sbrigani is represented by Sconce. Eraste is called Cheatwell, and he marries Betty, the maid; whilst O'Blunder marries Lucy, the young lady. Nérine and Lucette are wanting in this farce.

Mrs. Parsons wrote a comedy in two acts, *The Intrigues of a Morning*, played at the Theatre, Covent Garden, on the 18th of April, 1792. It is merely a poor abbreviated version of *M. de Pourceaugnac*.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### IN THE COMEDY.

MONSIEUR DE POURCEAU-  
GNAC.<sup>1</sup>

ORONTE.

ERASTE, *Julia's lover.*

SBRIGANI, *a Neapolitan ad-  
venturer.*

FIRST DOCTOR.

SECOND DOCTOR.

AN APOTHECARY.

A PEASANT.

A FEMALE PEASANT.

FIRST SWISS.

SECOND SWISS.

A POLICE OFFICER.

TWO INFERIOR POLICE  
OFFICERS.

JULIA, *Oronte's daughter.*

NÉRINE, *an intriguing wo-  
man, supposed to be from  
Picardy.*

LUCETTE, *supposed to be from  
Gascony.*

### IN THE BALLET.

A FEMALE MUSICIAN.

TWO MUSICIANS.

A TROOP OF DANCERS.

TWO DANCING MASTERS.

TWO DANCING PAGES.

FOUR SPECTATORS, *dancing.*

TWO DANCING SWISS.

TWO GROTESQUE DOCTORS.

COMIC DANCERS.

TWO SINGING ATTORNEYS.

TWO DANCING SOLICITORS.

TWO SERGEANTS, *dancing.*

A TROOP OF MASKED PEOP-  
LE.

A MALE SINGING GIPSY.

A FEMALE SINGING GIPSY.

A PANTALON; *singing.*

CHORUS OF SINGING MASKS.

DANCING BISCAYANS AND  
SAVAGES.

### THE SCENE IS IN PARIS.

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<sup>1</sup> This part was created by Molière, who wore "breeches of red damask, ornamented with lace, a blue velvet jacket, ornamented with imitation gold; a belt with fringes, green garters, a grey hat with a green feather, a scarf of green taffeta, a pair of gloves, a skirt of green taffeta, adorned with lace, and a cloak of black taffeta." The name Pourceaugnac appears to be formed from *pourceau*, a pig, with the Gascon ending *ac*. A dramatist, Hauteroche, introduced in his *Nobles de Province* (1677) a character, Cochonzac. The fun of calling the Limousin gentlemen "pigs" appears to be old, for when a certain Descars boasted that he had four thousand noblemen of that province who would oppose the Huguenots, Jeanne d'Albert, the mother of Henri IV., said: "They are called noblemen because they are dressed in *soie*," the latter word meaning "silk" and "bristles." The Limousins were sometimes called *mâche-raves*, turnip eaters, and Rabelais also makes fun of a Limousin student.





# MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC.

(*MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC*).

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—ERASTE, A FEMALE MUSICIAN, TWO SINGING MUSICIANS (*several others performing on instruments*), TROOP OF DANCERS.

ERAS. (*To the Musicians and Dancers.*) Carry out the orders which I have given you for the serenade. As for myself, I shall retire, and I do not wish to be seen here.

SCENE II.—A FEMALE MUSICIAN, TWO SINGING MUSICIANS (*several others playing instruments*), A TROOP OF DANCERS.

(This serenade is composed of singing, dancing, and playing. The words sung refer to the position of Eraste in regard to Julia, and express the feelings of the two lovers, who are crossed in love by their parents).

### *The Female Musician.*

Now scatter, O charming night, on every eye,  
The gentle violence of thy poppies ;  
Leave none in these enchanting spots awake  
But those hearts which Cupid's power sways.  
Thy shades and thy silence,

More fair than brightest day.  
Offer sweet moments in which to sigh with love.

*First Musician.*

How sweet a thing it is  
To sigh with love,  
When nothing our affection stays !  
To amiable inclinations our hearts incline,  
But there are tyrants to whom we owe life.  
How sweet a thing it is  
To sigh with love,  
When nothing our affection stays !

*Second Musician.*

Whate'er to our affections thy'll oppose,  
Against true love it naught avails:  
We must but love each other well,  
All obstacles to overcome.

*The Three together.*

Let us, therefore, love each other with eternal ardour :  
The parent's harshness, cruel constraints,  
Absence, labour, adverse fortune,  
Do but increase a faithful friendship.  
Let us, therefore, love each other with eternal ardour :  
When two fond hearts love each other well.  
All the rest is nothing.

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

(Dance of the two Dancing Masters.)

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

(Dance of the two Pages).

*Third Entry of the Ballet.*

(Four spectators, who quarreled during the Page's dance,  
now dance likewise, fighting all the while, sword in  
hand).

*Fourth Entry of the Ballet.*

(Two Swiss separate the four combatants, and after having  
reconciled them, dance with them.)

## SCENE III.—JULIA, ÉRASTE, NÉRINE.

JUL. Good Heavens! Eraste, let us take care not to be caught. I tremble lest we should be seen together; and everything would be lost after I had been forbidden to do so.

ERAS. I am looking out on all sides, and can see nothing.

JUL. (*To Nérine*). Do you watch also, Nérine; and take care that no one comes.

NER. (*Going to the back of the stage*). Depend upon me, and tell fearlessly what you have to say to each other.

JUL. Have you bethought yourself of something favourable in our affair? and think you, Eraste, to be able to prevent this vexatious marriage upon which my father has set his mind?

ERAS. Let us at least try our best; and we have already prepared a good many batteries to overturn this ridiculous design.

NER. (*Rushing on to Julia*). As I live, there is your father.

JUL. Quick, let us separate!

NER. No, no, no; do not stir; I was mistaken.

JUL. Good Heavens! Nérine, how silly of you to frighten us so!

ERAS. Yes, charming Julia, we have in readiness a quantity of engines for this purpose; and now that you have given me permission, we shall not scruple to use them all. Do not ask us all the contrivances which we shall bring into play; you will be amused by them; and it is better to leave you the pleasure of surprise, as they do in comedies, and to warn you of nothing which we mean to show you. Let it be sufficient to tell you that we have various stratagems in hand to be produced at the fit moment, and that the ingenious Nérine and the skillful Sbrigani have undertaken the affair.

NER. Assuredly. Is your father jesting to wish to bother you with his lawyer from Limoges, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, whom he has never seen in his life, and who is coming by coach to take you away before our very face? Are three or four thousand crowns more, and for

which he has only your uncle's word, to make him reject a lover whom you care for? and is a girl like you fit for a native of Limoges? If he wishes to get married why does he not take a lady born at Limoges for a wife, instead of troubling decent Christians? The name alone of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac has put me in a frightful passion. I am in a rage about Monsieur de Pourceaugnac. If it were nothing but his name, this Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, I would do everything to succeed<sup>a</sup> in breaking off this marriage, rather than that you should be Madam de Pourceaugnac. Pourceaugnac! is it bearable? No, Pourceaugnac is something which I cannot tolerate; and we shall play him so many tricks, we shall practice so many jokes upon jokes upon him, that we shall soon send Monsieur de Pourceaugnac back to Limoges again.

ERAS. Here comes our artful Neapolitan, who will give us some news.

SCENE IV.—JULIA, ÉRASTE, SBRIGANI, NÉRINE.

SBR. Your man is coming, Sir: I have seen him three leagues from here where the coach stopped, and where he came down for breakfast in the kitchen. I have studied him for full half an hour, and I know him already by heart. As for his figure, I will not speak of it: you will see for yourself how nature has designed him, and if his dress agrees with it. But as for his wit, I tell you, beforehand, that it is one of the dumbest going, that we will find in him just the very material for what we wish, and that he is the very man to fall into every trap which you may set for him.

ERAS. Are you telling us the truth?

SBR. Yes, if I know the world.

NÉR. Madam, this is a first-rate personage.<sup>b</sup> Your affair could not be in better hands, and he is the hero of our age

<sup>a</sup> The original has *j'y brûlerai mes livres*, "I shall burn my books," a saying borrowed from the old alchemists, who, after having tried everything, burn their books, because they are sure never to succeed; or burn them, because they have nothing more to heat the furnace with.

<sup>b</sup> In Plautus' *Asinaria*; or, *the Ass-dealer* (Act iii., Scene 2), Libanus and Leonida, the servants of Demenæstus, an aged Athenian, also extol each other's exploits.

for the kind of exploits in question ; a man who, twenty times in his life, has generously braved the galleys to serve his friends ; who, at the risk of his arms and shoulders, knows to put an end nobly to the most difficult adventures, and who, such as you see him, has been exiled from his country for I not know how many honourable actions, which he has generously undertaken.

SBR. I am confused by the praises with which you honour me ; and I could, with greater justice, give you some upon the marvels of your own life, and principally on the glory which you obtained when, with great honesty, you cheated at play, to the tune of twelve thousand crowns, that foreign young nobleman who was brought to your house ; when you gallantly made that false contract, which ruined a whole family ; when, with so much grandeur of soul, you denied the deposit which had been entrusted to you ; and when we saw you so generously give your evidence which caused two people to be hanged who had not deserved it.

NER. These are trifles not worth speaking of ; and your praises make me blush.<sup>4</sup>

SBR. I will spare your modesty ; let us drop this ; and, to make a beginning, let us go quickly and join our provincials, while you, on your side, shall hold the other actors of the comedy in readiness in case of need.

ERAS. At least, Madam, remember your part ; and, the better to hide our game, pretend, as you have been told, to be thoroughly satisfied with your father's plans.

JUL. If it depends but on this, matters will proceed swimmingly.

ERAS. But, fair Julia, if all our contrivances should be unsuccessful ?

JUL. Then I shall declare my true feelings to my father.

ERAS. And if, against your feelings, he should hold obstinately to his plan ?

JUL. I would threaten him to bury myself in a convent.

---

<sup>4</sup> Several of Molière's commentators blame Eraste and Julia for employing two such people as Nérine and Sbrigani ; but it is just possible that these two worthies may have been joking, whilst complimenting each other on their exploits.

ERAS. But if, notwithstanding all this, he would force you to this marriage?

JUL. What do you wish me to say to you?

ERAS. What do I wish you to say to me?

JUL. Yes.

ERAS. What one says when one loves truly.

JUL. But what?

ERAS. That nothing will compel you; and that, notwithstanding all a father's efforts, you will promise me to be mine.

JUL. Good Heavens! Eraste, content yourself with what I am doing now; and do not tempt the resolutions of my heart upon what may happen in the future; do not make my duty more painful with proposals of annoying rashness, of which, perhaps, we may not be in need; and if we are to come to it, let me, at least be driven to it by the turn of affairs.

ERAS. Well . . .

SBR. By my truth! there is our man; let us be on our guard.

NER. Ah! how he is built!

SCENE V.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, SBRIGANI.

POUR. (*Remaining on the side from which he enters, speaking to the people, who are following him*). Well! what? What is it? What is the matter? The devil take the silly town and the silly people in it! Not to be able to move a step without meeting with a lot of boobies who stare at you and laugh in your face! Eh! gentlemen gapers, attend to your own concerns, and allow people to pass on without grinning in their faces. May the devil take me, if I do not pummel the first whom I shall catch laughing.

SBR. (*Speaking to the same people*). What is the matter, gentlemen? what does this mean? with whom are you quarrelling? Are folks thus to make a jest of honest strangers who arrive here?

POUR. This is a sensible man, at least.

SBR. What behaviour in yours! and what is there to laugh at?

POUR. Very good.

SBR. Is there anything ridiculous about this gentleman?

POUR. Yes.

SBR. Is he in any way different from other people?

POUR. Am I misshapen, or humpbacked?

SBR. You should know how to treat people.

POUR. That is well said.

SBR. This gentleman's air commands respect.

POUR. That is true.

SBR. A person of quality.

POUR. Yes. A gentleman from Limoges.

SBR. A person of education.

POUR. Who has studied law.<sup>8</sup>

SBR. He does you too much honour by coming to your town.

POUR. Undoubtedly.

SBR. This gentleman is not a person to provoke laughter.

POUR. Assuredly.

SBR. And whoever shall laugh will have to deal with me.

POUR. (*To Sbrigani*). Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

SBR. I am sorry, Sir, to see a personage like you received in such a manner; and I ask your pardon for the town.

POUR. I am your servant.

SBR. I saw you this morning, Sir, with the coach, when you were breakfasting, and the grace with which you ate your bread, immediately made me conceive a friendship for you; and, as I know that you have never been in these parts, and that you are altogether new to them, I am very glad to have met with you, to offer you my services on this arrival, and to assist you in your behaviour amongst this people, who have not always the proper consideration for gentlemen.

POUR. You are doing me too much kindness.

SBR. I have already said to you, from the moment I saw you, I felt an inclination towards you.

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<sup>8</sup> Of course, M. de Pourceaugnac is not satisfied with being a person of education, but says that he "has studied law." Afterwards, in the twelfth Scene of the second Act, he denies this.

POUR. I am obliged to you.

SBR. Your physiognomy pleased me.

POUR. It is too much honour for me.

SBR. I perceived something honest in it.

POUR. I am your servant.

SBR. Something amiable.

POUR. Ah ! ah !

SBR. Something graceful.

POUR. Ah ! ah !

SBR. Something gentle.

POUR. Ah ! ah !

SBR. Something majestic.

POUR. Ah ! ah !

SBR. Something frank.

POUR. Ah ! ah !

SBR. And something cordial.

POUR. Ah ! ah !

SBR. I assure you that I am entirely yours.

POUR. I am under great obligations to you.

SBR. I speak from the bottom of my heart.

POUR. I believe you.

SBR. If I had the honour of being known to you, you would be aware that I am a man thoroughly sincere.

POUR. I do not doubt it.

SBR. An enemy to all roguery.

POUR. I am convinced of it.

SBR. And incapable of disguising my sentiments.

POUR. That is what I think.

SBR. You are looking at my dress, which is unlike other people's ; but I hail from Naples, at your service, and I wished somewhat to preserve the fashion of dressing and the sincerity of my country.<sup>6</sup>

POUR. That is quite right. As for me, I wished to be dressed like a courtier when he is going into the country.

SBR. Upon my word, it suits you better than any of our courtiers.

POUR. That is what my tailor told me. The dress is suitable and rich, and it will attract some notice here.

---

<sup>6</sup> The dress of Sbrigani is the traditional one of Mascarille and Crispin, striped red and white. The Neapolitans had the reputation of being neither very sincere nor honest.



SBR. Undoubtedly. Shall you not go to the Louvre?

POUR. I must go to pay my court.

SBR. The king will be delighted to see you.

POUR. I think so.

SBR. Have you fixed upon a lodging?

POUR. No; I was just going to look for one.

SBR. I shall be delighted to go with you for that purpose; I know all these parts well.

SCENE VI.—ÉRASTE, MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC,  
SBRIGANI.

ERAS. Ah! what is this? What do I see? What fortunate meeting! Monsieur de Pourceaugnac! How delighted I am to see you! How now! it seems that you have a difficulty in recognizing me!

POUR. Sir, I am your servant.

ERAS. Is it possible that five or six years have obliterated me from your memory, and that you do not recognize the best friend of all the Pourceaugnac family?

POUR. Pray, pardon me. (*Softly, to Sbrigani*). Upon my word, I do not know who he is.

ERAS. There is not a Pourceaugnac at Limoges whom I do not know, from the greatest to the least; I visited only them at the time I was there, and I had the honour of seeing you nearly every day.

POUR. It is I who had the honour, Sir.

ERAS. You do not recollect my face?

POUR. Yes, indeed. (*To Sbrigani*). I do not know him.

ERAS. You do not remember that I had the pleasure of taking wine with you, I do not know how many times!

POUR. Excuse me. (*To Sbrigani*). I do not know who this is.

ERAS. What do you call that innkeeper at Limoges who gives such good cheer?

POUR. Petit-Jean?

ERAS. That is he. We generally went together to him to feast. What do you call that place at Limoges where people promenade?

POUR. The cemetery of the Arènes?

ERAS. Exactly. That is where I passed such sweet

hours in enjoying your pleasant conversation. You do not recollect all that?

POUR. Excuse me ; I am beginning to remember. (*To Sbrigani*). May the devil take me if I recollect!

SBR. (*Softly, to Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). There are a hundred things like that which pass out of one's head.

ERAS. But pray embrace me, I beg, and let us renew the bonds of our old friendship.

SBR. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). That is a man who loves you well.

ERAS. Just tell me some news about all the family. How is this gentleman your . . . there . . . the one that is such a nice fellow?

POUR. My brother the consul?<sup>1</sup>

ERAS. Yes.

POUR. He could not be better.

ERAS. Certainly I am delighted to hear it. And the one who is always so good-tempered? There, the gentleman, your . . .

POUR. My cousin, the assessor?

ERAS. Precisely.

POUR. Ever gay and sprightly.

ERAS. Upon my word this gives me great pleasure. And your uncle, the . . .

POUR. I have no uncle.

ERAS. You had one, though, at that time.

POUR. No, nothing but an aunt.

ERAS. That is what I meant, the lady your aunt. How is she?

POUR. She has been dead these six months.

ERAS. Alas ! poor woman ! she was such a good creature.

POUR. Then there is my nephew, the canon, who nearly died of small-pox.

ERAS. What a pity that would have been !

POUR. Did you know him also?

ERAS. Indeed ; did I know him? A tall fine-made fellow.

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<sup>1</sup> *Consul* was the name given to municipal officers in the southern provinces of France.

POUR. Not of the tallest !

ERAS. No, but well built.

POUR. Eh ! yes.

ERAS. Who is your nephew ?

POUR. Yes.

ERAS. Son of your brother and sister ?

POUR. Exactly so.

ERAS. Canon of the church of . . . . what do you call it ?

POUR. St. Stephen.

ERAS. That is he. I do not know any other.

POUR. (*To Sbrigani*). He mentions the whole family.

SBR. He knows you better than you are aware of.

POUR. From what I perceive, you stopped a long while in our town.

ERAS. Two whole years.

POUR. Then you were there when the governor stood sponsor to my cousin, the deputy-assessor's<sup>6</sup> child ?

ERAS. Indeed I was one of the first invited.

POUR. That was an elegant affair.

ERAS. Yes, very elegant !

POUR. A well-served collation.

ERAS. There is no doubt of that.

POUR. Then you must have witnessed the quarrel which I had with that gentleman from Périgord.

ERAS. Yes.

POUR. Zounds ! he found his match.

ERAS. Ha ! ha !

POUR. He gave me a slap, but I told him what I thought of him.

ERAS. To be sure. However, I insist upon you taking no other quarters than with me.

POUR. Really I could not think . . .

ERAS. Are you joking ? I shall not allow my best friend to stop anywhere but with me.

POUR. It would be . . .

ERAS. No, may the devil fly away with me ! You shall stay with me.

---

<sup>6</sup> The original has *l'illu*. See *Tartuffe*, Vol. II., note 46.



SBR. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Since he is obstinately bent upon it, I advise you to accept this offer.

ERAS. Where is your luggage?

POUR. I left it with my servant where the coach stopped.

ERAS. Let us send some one to fetch them.

POUR. No, I have forbidden him to stir, unless I came myself, for fear of some roguery.

SBR. That was a prudent precaution.

POUR. One must be somewhat careful in these parts.

ERAS. We see that clever people are up to everything.

SBR. I will accompany this gentleman, and conduct him back again to where you wish.

ERAS. Do so. I shall be glad to give some orders, and you have but to come back to this house.

SBR. We shall be with you shortly.

ERAS. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). I shall expect you impatiently.

POUR. (*To Sbrigani*). This is an acquaintance which I did not dream of.

SBR. He has the air of a gentleman.

ERAS. (*Alone*). Upon my word, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, we will attack you on all sides. Things are prepared; I have but to give the signal. Hullo!

SCENE VII.—ERASTE, AN APOTHECARY.

ERAS. I believe, Sir, you are the doctor who has been spoken to in my name.

APOTH. No, Sir; I am not the doctor; that honour does not belong to me; I am but an apothecary, an unworthy apothecary, at your service.

ERAS. And the doctor, is he within?

APOTH. Yes. He is just occupied in dispatching some patients; and I will go and tell him that you are here.

ERAS. No, do not stir. I will wait until he has done. It is to place under his care a certain relation of ours, of whom we spoke, and who has been attacked by a fit of madness, which we should be very glad to have cured before he is married.

APOTH. I know what it is, I know all about it; and I was with him when they came to speak to him about this

matter. Indeed, you could not have addressed yourself to an abler doctor. He is a man who knows medicine thoroughly, as I know my alphabet,<sup>9</sup> and who would not abate one iota of the rules of the ancients, even if people die through it. Yes, he always follows the high-road, the high road, and does not try to find out mares' nests; and for all the gold of the world, he would not cure any one with other remedies than those which the faculty prescribes.

ERAS. He does right. A patient ought not to wish to be cured unless the faculty permits it.

APOTH. It is not because we are fast friends that I speak thus: but it is really a treat to be his patient. I had rather die by his remedies than be cured by those of some one else.<sup>10</sup> For, whatever may happen, one is certain that things are done in regular order; and when one dies under his treatment, your heirs have nothing to reproach you with.

ERAS. That is a great consolation to a defunct.

APOTH. Assuredly. One is at least glad to have died methodically. For the rest, he is not one of those doctors who haggle with diseases; he is an expeditious man, expeditious, who loves to dispatch his patients; and when one has to die, it is accomplished with the greatest possible quickness.

ERAS. In fact, there is nothing like having done with a thing promptly.

APOTH. That is true. What is the good of haggling so much, and so much beating about the bush? One ought to know quickly the short or long of an illness.

ERAS. You are right.

APOTH. Already there are three of my children whose complaints he has done me the honor to treat, who have died in less than four days, and who in some one else's hands would have languished for three months or more.

ERAS. It is pleasant to have such friends.

APOTH. No doubt it is. I have only two children left, of whom he takes care as if they were his own; he treats

<sup>9</sup> The original has *ma Croix-de-par-Dieu*.

<sup>10</sup> Molière has already employed this joke in *Love is the best Doctor*, Act ii., Scene 5 (see Vol. II.)

and controls them at his own fancy, without my interfering in anything ; and generally, when I come back from town, I am quite surprised to find them bled or purged by his orders.

ERAS. Most tender cares, these.

APOTH. Here he is, here he is, here he comes.

SCENE VIII.—ÉRASTE, FIRST DOCTOR, AN APOTHECARY,  
A PEASANT, A FEMALE PEASANT.

PEAS. (*To the Doctor*). He can bear it no longer, Sir ; and he says that he feels the most awful pains in his head.

1ST DOC. The patient is a fool: seeing that, in the complaint with which he is attacked he ought not, according to Galen, to suffer from the head at all, but from the spleen.

PEAS. Be that as it may, Sir, he has nevertheless had looseness of the bowels for the last six months.

1ST DOC. Good ! that is a sign that it is getting clear inside. I will come and see him in two or three days ; but, should he die before that time, do not fail to let me know ; for it is not etiquette for a doctor to visit the dead.

F. PEAS. (*To the Doctor*). My father, Sir, is getting worse and worse.

1ST DOC. That is not my fault. I am prescribing him remedies : why does he not get better ? How many times has he been bled ?

F. PEAS. Fifteen times, Sir, in twenty days.

1ST DOC. Fifteen times bled ?

F. PEAS. Yes.

1ST DOC. And he does not get better ?

F. PEAS. No, Sir.

1ST DOC. That shows that the disease is not in the blood. We shall purge him as many times, to find out whether it is not in the humours ; and, if that does not succeed, we shall send him to take the waters.

APOTH. That is the end ; that must be the end of all physic.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> When *M. de Pourceaugnac* is acted at the *Comédie Française*, this scene is omitted.

## SCENE IX.—ÉRASTE, FIRST DOCTOR, APOTHECARY.

ERAS. (*To Doctor*). It is I, Sir, who sent to speak to you, a few days ago, about a relative who is somewhat troubled in his mind, whom I wish to place under your care, so that he may be cured with greater facility, and may be least noticed.

1ST DOC. Yes, Sir; I have already prepared everything, and promise you to take the utmost care of him.

ERAS. He is just coming now.

1ST DOC. That happens very fortunately, and I have here one of my old friends with me, with whom I shall be glad to consult upon his illness.

## SCENE X.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, ÉRASTE, FIRST DOCTOR, AN APOTHECARY.

ERAS. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Some little unforeseen business obliges me to go away just now (*Pointing to the Doctor*); but I leave you in the hands of this gentleman, who will take care, for my sake, to treat you as well as possible.

1ST DOC. The duty of my profession enjoins me to do so; and it is quite sufficient that you charge me with this care.

POUR. (*Aside*). It is his steward; and he must be a man of position.

1ST DOC. (*To Eraste*). Yes, I assure you that I shall treat this gentleman methodically, and according to every rule of our art.

POUR. Good Heavens! there is no need of so many ceremonies; and I have not come here to cause any inconvenience.

1ST DOC. Such an occupation gives me only joy.

ERAS. (*To the Doctor*). Here are six pistoles in advance, besides what I have promised you.

POUR. No, if you please, I shall not allow you to go to any expense, and you must not send out for anything on my account.

ERAS. Pray do not trouble yourself; it is not for what you imagine.

POUR. I beg of you to treat me only as a friend.

ERAS. That is what I intend to do. (*Softly to the Doctor*). I recommend you above all not to let him slip out of your hands ; for he sometimes attempts to escape.

1ST DOC. Be not uneasy.

ERAS. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). I pray you to excuse my incivility.

POUR. Do not mention it ; and you are doing me too much honour.

SCENE XI.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, FIRST DOCTOR, SECOND DOCTOR, AN APOTHECARY.

1ST DOC. It is a great honour to me, Sir, to have been selected to attend to you.

POUR. I am your servant.

1ST DOC. This is a colleague of mine, an able man, with whom I am going to consult about the manner in which we shall treat you.

POUR. There is no need of so many ceremonies, I tell you ; and I am a man to be satisfied with ordinary things.

1ST DOC. Come, place chairs.

(*Two Servants enter and place chairs.*)

POUR. (*Aside*). These are very lugubrious servants for a young man to keep.

1ST DOC. Come, Sir ; take a seat, Sir.

(*The two Doctors make Monsieur de Pourceaugnac sit down between them.*)

POUR. (*Taking a seat*). Your very humble servant. (*The two Doctors each take one of his hands to feel his pulse*). What does this mean ?

1ST DOC. Do you eat well, Sir ?<sup>12</sup>

POUR. Yes ; and drink better still.

1ST DOC. So much the worse. This great craving for cold and wet is an indication of the heat and dryness in the inside. Do you sleep soundly ?

POUR. Yes, when I have supped well.

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<sup>12</sup> In Plautus' *Menæchmi*; or, the twin-brothers, Menæchmus Sosicles is mistaken for his twin-brother, Menæchmus of Epidamnus, and behaves so oddly, that the latter's father-in-law and wife consider him mad, and wish him to be treated by a doctor. The real Menæchmus makes his appearance (Act v., Scene 3) and the scene between him and the physician, who thinks he is insane, is like the one between M. de Pourceaugnac and the two doctors.



1ST DOC. Have you any dreams?

POUR. Sometimes.

1ST DOC. Of what nature are they?

POUR. Of the nature of dreams. What sort of a conversation is this?

1ST DOC. Your dejections, how are they?

POUR. Upon my word, I understand nought of these questions; and I prefer something to drink.

1ST DOC. A little patience. We are going to argue about your case before you; and we shall do so in French, to be the more intelligible.

POUR. What great arguing is needed to eat a morsel?

1ST DOC. Since one cannot cure a disease, unless one knows it perfectly, and since one cannot know it perfectly without establishing a particular theory, and its real kind, by its diagnostic and prognostic signs; you will allow me, my elder colleague, to enter upon the consideration of the disease in question, before referring to the therapeutics, and the remedies which we shall determine upon for the perfect cure of said disease. I say, then, Sir, with your leave, that our patient here present is unfortunately attacked, affected, possessed, and troubled by that kind of madness which we very aptly denominate hypochondriacal melancholy; a kind of madness very troublesome, and which requires nothing less than an Esculapius like yourself, consummate in our art;<sup>13</sup> you, I say, who have grown old in harness, as they say, and through whose hands so many of all sorts have passed. I call it hypochondriacal melancholy to distinguish it from the two others; for the celebrated Galen has, as he always does, learnedly established three kinds of this disease, which we call melancholy, so named not only by the Latins, but also by the Greeks; which is to be well observed in our case: the first, which emanated from the really bad state of the brain; the second, which proceeds entirely from the blood, made and become atrabilious; the third, called hypochondriacal, which is ours, and which is caused by some defect of some part of the lower

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<sup>13</sup> When M. de Pourceaugnac is acted, the passage from "you, I say," until "proved to suffer from," is omitted.

abdomen, and of the lower region, but particularly from the spleen, the heat and inflammation of which drives to the brain of our patient a great deal of fuliginous, thick, and gross matter, the black and malignant vapour of which causes depravation of the functions of the principal faculty, and produces the complaints, by which, according to our argument, he is manifestly attacked, and proved to suffer from. That it be so: and as an incontestable diagnosis of what I tell you, you have only to consider the great seriousness which you perceive, this gloominess, accompanied by fear and mistrust, pathognomonic and individual signs of this complaint, so well described by the divine old man, Hippocrates; this physiognomy, these red and haggard eyes, this great beard, this state of the body, thin, emaciated, black, and hairy; which signs show him to be very much affected by this disease, proceeding from the illness of hypochondriasis; which disease, by lapse of time, having become naturalized, chronic, habitual, and ingrained in him, might well degenerate either into mania, or into consumption, or into apoplexy, or even into determined phrenzy and raving. All this taken for granted, since a disease well defined is half cured, for *ignoti nulla est curatio morbi*,<sup>14</sup> it will not be difficult to determine the remedies which we must give to this gentleman. Firstly, to cure this obdurate plethora, and this luxuriant cacochymy throughout the body, I am of the opinion that he should be liberally phlebotomized; that is to say, that he should be bled frequently and copiously, in the first place, at the basilic vein, then at the cephalic vein,<sup>15</sup> and even, if the disease be obstinate, that the vein in the forehead should be opened, and that the opening should be large, that the thick blood may come out; and at the same time that he should be purged, deobstructed, and evacuated by proper and suitable purgatives; that means by cholagogues, melanogogues,<sup>16</sup> et cetera; and as the real source of

<sup>14</sup> There is no cure for a disease which is not known.

<sup>15</sup> The basilic vein was the middle vein of the right arm; the cephalic vein, a vein running along the arm, so named because the ancients used to open it for disorders of the head.

<sup>16</sup> A cholagogue is a cathartic to carry off the bile; a melanagogue a remedy to drive out black malignant matter.

all the evil is either a gross or a feculent humour, or else a black and thick vapour, which obscures, infects, and contaminates the animal spirit, it is proper that he should afterwards take a bath of soft and clean water, with plenty of whey, to purify, by the water, the feculence of the gross humours, and to clear, by the milk, the blackness of this vapour: but, before all things, I think it right to amuse him by agreeable conversations, songs and musical instruments, to which we might add some dancers without any objection, so that by their movements, nimbleness, and agility they may excite and awaken the stagnation of his benumbed spirits, which occasions the thickness of his blood, by which this disease is caused. These are the remedies of which I have been thinking, to which many other and better ones might be added by this gentleman our master and senior, according to the experience, judgment, knowledge, and sufficiency which he has acquired in our art. *Dixi.*

2d Doc. Heaven forbid, Sir, that I should entertain the thought of adding aught to what you have just said! You have discoursed so well on all the signs, symptoms, and causes of this gentleman's complaint; the argument which you have produced is so learned and beautiful that it is impossible for him not to be mad and hypochondriacally melancholic; and should he not be, he must become so for the sake of the beautiful things which you have said, and for the justness of the reasoning which you have produced. Yes, Sir, you have very graphically depicted, *graphic depinxisti*, everything that pertains to this disease. Nothing could be more learnedly, wisely, ingeniously conceived, thought-out, imagined, than that which you have pronounced on this complaint, whether regarded as diagnosis, prognosis, or therapeutics; and nothing remains for me to do here but to congratulate this gentleman upon having fallen into your hands, and to tell him that he ought to be only too happy to be mad, to prove the efficacy and gentleness of the remedies which you have so judiciously proposed. I approve of them all, *manibus et pedibus descendo in tuam sententiam*.<sup>17</sup> All that I would wish to add is to

<sup>17</sup> "I am hand and feet of your opinion," because in the Roman Senate

make the blood-lettings and purgatives in odd numbers, *numero deus impare gaudet*; <sup>18</sup> to take the whey before the bath; to apply a bandage with salt to his forehead (salt is the symbol of wisdom); to have the walls of his room whitewashed, in order to dissipate the gloom of his spirits, *album est disgregativum visus*; <sup>19</sup> and to give him by-and-by a small clyster, to serve as a prelude and introduction to those judicious remedies, from which, if he is to be cured at all, he ought to receive relief. May Heaven grant that these remedies, which are yours, Sir, may prove successful, according to our intention!

POUR. Gentlemen, I have been listening to you for this hour. Are we playing a comedy here?

1ST DOC. No, Sir, we are not playing at all.

POUR. What is all this? and what do you mean by all this gibberish and foolery?

1ST DOC. Good! he insults us! that is a diagnosis which was wanting for the confirmation of the disease; and this might be turning to mania.

POUR. (*Aside*). With whom have I been placed here? (*He expectorates two or three times*).

1ST DOC. Another diagnosis; frequent expectoration.

POUR. Let us drop this, and get away from here.

1ST DOC. Another still; the anxiety to be moving.

POUR. But what is all this affair, and what do you want with me?

1ST DOC. To cure you, according to the order which has been given us.

POUR. To cure me?

1ST DOC. Yes.

POUR. Zounds! I am not ill.

1ST DOC. A bad sign, when a patient does not feel his complaint.

POUR. I tell you that I am very well.

1ST DOC. We know better than you how you are; and we are physicians who see clearly into your constitution.

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those who were of the same opinion as the proposer of a certain law, went on his side, and even sometimes applauded.

<sup>18</sup> This is a phrase from the eighth eclogue of Virgil, "An odd number pleases the god."

<sup>19</sup> White wearies the sight.

POUR. If you are physicians, I have no business with you; and I do not care a straw for physic.

1ST DOC. Hum! hum! This man is more mad than we thought.

POUR. My father and mother would never take medicine, and they both died without doctor's assistance.

1ST DOC. I am no longer surprised that they have produced a son who is bereft of his senses. (*To the second Doctor*). Let us proceed to the cure; and by the exhilarating gentleness of harmony, soften, mitigate, and calm the acerbity of his spirits, which I see on the point of becoming inflamed.<sup>20</sup>

SCENE XII.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC.

What the devil is this? Have the people of these parts taken leave of their wits? I have never seen anything like it, and I understand nothing about it.

SCENE XIII.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, TWO GROTESQUE DOCTORS, *They first all sit down, the Doctors rise several times to M. de Pourceaugnac, who rises as often to return the compliment.*

THE TWO DOCTS. Good day, good day, good day,<sup>21</sup>  
Do not allow yourself to be killed  
By melancholic grief.  
We will make you laugh  
With our harmonious songs.  
It is only to cure you  
That we have come hither.  
Good day, good day, good day.

1ST DOC. Madness is nothing else  
But melancholy.  
The patient need not despair.  
If he will but take a little recreation.  
Madness is nothing else  
But melancholy.

<sup>20</sup> The consultation of the two doctors is only a very slight caricature of the nonsense spoken by physicians in Molière's time.

<sup>21</sup> The original is sung in Italian.

2D DOC. Come, take courage; sing, dance, laugh;  
 And, if you would do better still,  
 When you feel your fit of madness come on,  
 Take a glass of wine,  
 And sometimes a pinch of snuff,  
 Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.  
 Come, keep gay.

SCENE XIV.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, TWO GRO-  
 TESQUE DOCTORS, MUMMERS.<sup>22</sup>

*Entry of the Ballet.*

*Dance of the Mummers round Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.*

SCENE XV.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, AN APOTHE-  
 CARY, (*carrying a syringe*).

APOTH. This is a little remedy, a little remedy, which  
 we must apply, if you please, if you please.<sup>23</sup>

POUR. How now? I do not want it!

APOTH. It has been prescribed, Sir, it has been pre-  
 scribed.

POUR. Ah! what a noise!

APOTH. Take it, Sir, take it; it will do you no harm,  
 it will do you no harm.

POUR. Ah!

APOTH. It is just a little injection, a little injection,  
 gentle, gentle; it is gentle, gentle; there, Sir, take it,  
 take it; it is to open the bowels, to open the bowels, to  
 open the bowels.

SCENE XVI.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, AN APOTHE-  
 CARY, TWO GROTESQUE DOCTORS, MUMMERS

TWO DOCT. Take it, Sir, take, take it, it will do you no  
 harm; take it, Sir, take it, Sir.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The original has *matassins*, a word derived either from the Spanish or Italian, and signifying "dancers who engage in a mock battle."

<sup>23</sup> Such a scene, which would offend now, was not considered indelicate, in Molière's time.

<sup>24</sup> We give the original Italian, because M. de Pourceaugnac refers to it in the Fourth Scene of the Second Act: "Piglialo sù,—Signor monsu;—Piglialo, piglialo, piglialo sù,—Che non ti farà male.—Piglialo sù questo serviziale:—Piglialo sù,—Signor monsu;—Piglialo, piglialo, piglialo sù."



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H. Vernet p.

N. G. 1847

# **MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC.**

Acte I.





POUR. Go to the devil !

(*Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, putting on his hat to protect himself against the syringes, is followed by the two Doctors and the Mummers; he passes at the back of the stage, and returns to place himself again on his chair, near which he finds the Apothecary waiting for him, which compels him to sit down; the two Doctors and Mummers re-enter also.*)

TWO DOC. Take it Sir, take it, it will do you no harm; take it, Sir, take it, Sir.

(*Monsieur de Pourceaugnac takes to his heels with the chair behind him; the Apothecary places his syringe against it, and the Doctors and Mummers follow him.*)<sup>25</sup>

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## ACT II.

### SCENE I.—FIRST DOCTOR, SBRIGANI.

1ST DOCT. He has forced every obstacle which I had placed in his way, and has withdrawn himself from the remedies which I began to apply to him.

SBR. That is being a great enemy to himself, to fly from remedies so salutary as yours.

1ST DOCT. It is a sign of a disordered brain, and of a corrupted reason, not to wish to be cured.

SBR. You would have cured him without any difficulty.

1ST DOCT. Undoubtedly: even if there had been a complication of a dozen diseases.

SBR. He makes you lose fifty well-earned pistoles however.

1ST DOCT. I! I do not intend to lose them, and I mean to cure him in spite of himself. He is bound to take my

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<sup>25</sup> One of the grotesque doctors was represented by the famous musician Lulli, who, it is said, wrote the words, and certainly composed the music, of the thirteenth scene. He played under the name of Signor *Chiacchiarone*. This stands probably in the book of the ballet for the Italian *chiacchierone*, which means "talker of nonsense," and under which name he also, at a later period, played the Muphti, in the *Citizen who apes the Nobleman*. The pursuit after M. de Pourceaugnac is sometimes more or less prolonged. After he has left the stage, he reappears through the prompter's box, with all his enemies in full pursuit; he then takes a deal board, and knocks down one of the mummers, who is carried off. He wishes to raise a laugh, and often succeeds.

remedies, and I will have him apprehended wherever I find him, as a deserter from physic, and as having committed an infraction of my prescriptions.

SBR. You are right. Your remedies were certain, and it is robbing you of so much money.

1ST DOC. Where can I get some news about him?

SBR. At Mr. Oronte's, surely, whose daughter he has come to marry, and who, knowing nothing of the infirmity of his intended son-in-law, will perhaps make haste to conclude this marriage.

1ST DOC. I will go and speak to him directly.

SBR. You can do no harm.

1ST DOC. He is bound to my consultations, and a patient shall not play the fool with a doctor.

SBR. That is very well said of you; and if you take my advice, you will not allow him to be married until you have physicked him to your heart's content.

1ST DOC. Leave me to manage it.

SBR. (*Going aside*). I, on my part, will go and bring another battery into play; and the father-in-law shall be duped as much as the son-in-law.

#### SCENE II.—ORONTE, FIRST DOCTOR.

1ST DOC. You have a certain Monsieur de Pourceaugnac with you, Sir, who is to marry your daughter?

ORON. Yes; I am expecting him from Limoges, and he ought to have arrived by this time.

1ST DOC. So he is, and he has run away from my house, after having been placed there; but I forbid you, in the name of the Faculty, to go on with the marriage which you have arranged, until I have duly prepared him for it, and put him in a condition to raise up children sound in both body and mind.

ORON. What do you mean?

1ST DOC. Your intended son-in-law has been constituted my patient; his disease, which I have been told to cure, is property which belongs to me, and which I reckon among my possessions; and I declare to you that I will not suffer him to marry before he has given satisfaction to the medical Faculty, and taken the remedies which I have prescribed for him.

ORON. Is there any complaint?

1ST DOC. Yes.

ORON. And which, pray?

1ST DOC. Do not make yourself uneasy.

ORON. Is it some complaint which . . .

1ST DOC. Doctors are bound to secrecy. It is sufficient that I command you, you and your daughter, not to celebrate, without my consent, the nuptials with him, under penalty of incurring the displeasure of the Faculty, and of being overwhelmed with every disease, as it pleases us.

ORON. If that is the case, I do not intend to conclude this match.

1ST DOC. He has been placed under my care ; and he is bound to be my patient.

ORON. That is all right.

1ST DOC. He may run away as much as he likes ; I shall have him condemned, by decree, to be cured by me.

ORON. You have my consent.

1ST DOC. Yes, he must be cured by me, or die.

ORON. I am quite willing.

1ST DOC. And, if I do not find him, I shall hold you responsible ; and I shall cure you instead of him.

ORON. I am in good health.

1ST DOC. That does not matter. I must have a patient ; and I shall take whom I can.

ORON. Take whom you like ; but it shall not be me.  
(Alone). That is a nice argument !

SCENE III.—ORONTE, SBRIGANI, *disguised as a Flemish merchant*.

SBR. Sir, by your leave, I am a foreign Flemish merchant, who should wish to ask you for some little information.\*

ORON. What is it, Sir ?

SBR. Pray, put your hat on, Sir.

ORON. Tell me, Sir, what you wish ?

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\* Sbrigani speaks a kind of broken French, which we thought it useless to try and imitate in English. Here is his first phrase in the original : "*Montsir, avec le vôtre permissione, je suisse un trancher marchand flamane, qui voudroit bienne vous temandair un petit nouvel.*"

SBR. I shall not do so, Sir, unless you put your hat on your head.

ORON. Be it so, then. What is the matter?

SBR. Do you know perchance in this town a certain Mr. Oronte?

ORON. Yes, I do know him.

SBR. And what kind of man is he, Sir, if you please?

ORON. He is a man like other men

SBR. I ask you, Sir, whether he is a rich man, who is well to do?

ORON. Yes.

SBR. But very much rich, I mean, Sir?

ORON. Yes.

SBR. I am very glad of it, Sir.

ORON. But why so?

SBR. It is, Sir, for a certain reason, which is of consequence to us.

ORON. But once more, why?

SBR. It is, Sir, because this Mr. Oronte gives his daughter in marriage to a certain Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

ORON. Well?

SBR. And this Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, Sir, is a man who owes a great deal to ten or twelve Flemish merchants who have come hither.

ORON. This Monsieur de Pourceaugnac owes a great deal to ten or twelve merchants?

SBR. Yes, Sir; and eight months ago, we have obtained a little judgment against him; and he has put off paying all his creditors until this marriage, if this Mr. Oronte gives him his daughter.

ORON. Ho! ho! he has put his creditors off till then?

SBR. Yes, Sir; and we expect this marriage with great anxiety.

ORON. (*Aside*). This is not a bad warning. (*Aloud*). I wish you good day.

SBR. I thank you, Sir, for your great favour.

ORON. Your very humble servant.

SBR. I am so, Sir, after the great obligation for the information which you have given me. (*Alone, after having taken off his beard and undone the Flemish dress, which he*

*wears over his*). Things are not going badly. Let us doff our Flemish disguise, to bethink ourselves of other contrivances; and let us endeavour to sow so much suspicion and division between the father and the son-in-law, that it shall break off the proposed marriage. Both are equally disposed to swallow the baits which are held out to them; and, amongst us rogues of the first water, it is but child's play, when we meet with such easy game as that.

SCENE IV.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, SBRIGANI.

POUR. (*Believing himself alone*). *Pigliato su, pigliato su, signor Monsu*. What the devil is it? (*Perceiving Sbrigani*). Ah!

SBR. What is it, Sir? What ails you?

POUR. Everything which I see appears an enemy to me.

SBR. How?

POUR. You do not know what has happened to me in that house, to the door of which you escorted me?

SBR. Indeed I do not. What is it?

POUR. I thought to be treated there in a proper manner.

SBR. Well?

POUR. I leave you in the hands of this gentleman. Doctors dressed in black. In a chair. Feel the pulse. That it be so. He is mad. Two stout boobies. Big hats. *Buon di, buon di*. Six pantaloons. Ta, ra, ta, ta; ta, ra, ta, ta. *Allegramente, monsu Pourceaugnac*. An apothecary. Injection. Take it, Sir; take it, take it. It is gentle, gentle, gentle. It is to loosen, to loosen, loosen. *Pigliato su, signor Monsu; pigliato, pigliato, pigliato su*. Never have I been so crammed with silliness.

SBR. What does all this mean?

POUR. It means that this man, with his great embraces, is a scamp, who has put me in a house to make a fool of me and to play me a trick.

SBR. Can it be possible?

POUR. Undoubtedly. There were a dozen of mad people at my heels, and I have had the greatest trouble in the world to escape from their paws.

SBR. Look at that now; faces are very deceptive! I should have thought him the most affectionate of your

friends. This is one of my surprises, how it is possible that there are such rogues in the world.

POUR. Do I not smell of an injection? Just see, if you please.

SBR. Eh! there is something very like it.

POUR. My mind and nose are full of it; and it always seems to me that I see a dozen syringes taking aim at me.

SBR. This is very great wickedness! and men must be great wretches and scoundrels.

POUR. Pray, tell me the whereabouts of Mr. Oronte's house; I shall be glad to go there by and by.

SBR. Ah! ah! you are then of an amorous disposition? and you have heard it mentioned that this Mr. Oronte has a daughter.

POUR. Yes, I come to marry her.

SBR. Come to mar . . . marry her?

POUR. Yes.

SBR. In marriage?

POUR. In what way then?

SBR. Ah! that is a different thing; and I ask your pardon.

POUR. What does this mean?

SBR. Nothing.

POUR. But once more?

SBR. Nothing, I tell you. I spoke somewhat hastily.

POUR. I beseech you to tell me what there is beneath this.

SBR. No, that is not necessary.

POUR. Pray.

SBR. No, not at all; I beg of you to excuse me.

POUR. Are you not a friend?

SBR. Yes; one could not be more so.

POUR. Then you should conceal nothing from me.

SBR. It is a matter which concerns the interest of our neighbour.

POUR. Well, to induce you to open your heart to me, here is a little ring, which I pray you to keep for my sake.

SBR. Just allow me to consider whether I can do so in all conscience. (*After having gone a few steps away from Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Here is a man, who looks after his welfare, who tries to provide for his daughter as



advantageously as possible; and we must do harm to no one. Those things are well known, it is true; but I am going to reveal them to a man who is ignorant of them; and it is forbidden to bruit scandal about one's neighbour, that is true. But, on the other hand, here is a stranger whom they wish to deceive, and who, in good faith, comes to marry a girl whom he does not know, and has never seen; a gentleman full of candour, to whom I feel well disposed, who does me the honour to look upon me as his friend, places confidence in me, and gives me a ring to wear for his sake. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Yes, I find that I can tell you matters without wounding my conscience; but let us try to tell them to you as mildly as possible, and to spare people as much as we can. To tell you that this girl leads a dishonourable life, would be putting it somewhat too strongly: let us seek, to explain ourselves, some milder terms. The word *galante*, again, seems not enough; that of consummate *coquette* appears to me to serve our end, and I may employ it to tell you honestly what she is.<sup>27</sup>

POUR. Then they wish to make me their dupe.

SBR. Perhaps, at bottom, there is not so much harm as the world believes; and after all, there are people who are above these kinds of things, and who do not believe that their honour depends . . .

POUR. I am your servant. I do not care to wear a head-dress like that; and, in the Pourceaugnac family, we like to go about with heads erect.

SBRI. Here comes the father.

POUR. That old man.

SBRI. Yes. I leave you.

SCENE V.—ORONTE, MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC.

POUR. Good day, Sir, good day.

ORON. Your servant, Sir, your servant.

POUR. You are Mr. Oronte, is it not so?

ORON. Yes.

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<sup>27</sup> The meaning of the words has changed since Molière's time, when *galante* was considered a milder term than *coquette*; now, it is the contrary.

POUR. And I am Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

ORON. So much the better.

POUR. Think you, Mr. Oronte, that the Limousins are fools?

ORON. Think you, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, that the Parisians are idiots.

POUR. Do you imagine, Mr. Oronte, that a man like me is so hungry after a woman?

ORON. Do you imagine, Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, that a girl like mine is so hungry after a husband?

SCENE VI.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, JULIA,  
ORONTE.

JUL. They have just told me, father, that Monsieur de Pourceaugnac has arrived. Ah! this is he no doubt, and my heart tells me so. How well he is built! how well he looks! and how glad I am to have such a husband! Permit me to embrace him, and to show him that . . .

ORON. Gently, daughter, gently.

POUR. (*Aside*). The devil! what a forward hussy! How she fires up at once!

ORON. I should much like to know, Monsieur Pourceaugnac, by what reason you come to . . .

JUL. (*Approaches Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, looks at him with a languishing air, and endeavours to take his hand*). How glad I am to see you! and how I burn with impatience . . .

ORON. Ah! daughter, get you gone from that, I tell you.

POUR. (*Aside*). Oh! oh! what a sprightly wench!

ORON. I should like to know, I say, by what reason, if you please, you have the audacity . . .

(*Julia continues the same by-play.*)

POUR. Odds, upon my life!

ORON. (*To Julia*). Again! What does this mean?

JUL. May I not caress the husband whom you have chosen for me?

ORON. No. Go in-doors.

JUL. Let me look at him.

ORON. Go in-doors, I tell you.

JUL. I wish to stop here, if you please.

ORON. But I do not please ; and, if you do not go in directly . . .

JUL. Very well ! I am going.

ORON. My daughter is a fool who does not understand these matters.

POUR. (*Aside*). How delighted she is with us !

ORON. (*To Julia, who has remained after having taken a few steps, pretending to go*). You will not go then ?

JUL. When am I going to be married to this gentleman ?

ORON. Never ; and you are not for him.

JUL. But I will be for him, since you have promised him to me.

ORON. If I promised him, I retract my promise.

POUR. (*Aside*). She would like to make sure of me.

JUL. You may do what you like ; we shall be married in spite of all the world.

ORON. I shall hinder you well enough, both of you, I assure you. What a frenzy possesses her all at once.

SCENE VII.—ORONTE, MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC.

POUR. Good Heavens ! intended father-in-law, do not give yourself so much trouble ; we do not mean to carry off your daughter, and all your make-believes will lead to nothing.

ORON. Neither will yours have any great effect.

POUR. Did you imagine that Léonard de Pourceaugnac is the man to buy a pig in a poke,<sup>22</sup> and that there was not sufficient judgment in him to know how to manage to be informed about people's history, and to find out whether, in marrying, he had sufficient guarantee for his honour.

ORON. I do not know what this means ; but did you take it into your head that a man of sixty-three years of age would have so little brains, and so little consideration for his daughter, as to marry her to a man who has, you know what, and who has been put into the hands of a doctor to be cured ?

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<sup>22</sup> The original has *chat en poche* ; hence the English word "poke," for a sack, a bag.

POUR. That is a trick which has been played upon me ; and I suffer from no complaint.

ORON. The doctor told me so himself.

POUR. The doctor told a lie then. I am a gentleman, and I shall ask him satisfaction sword in hand.

ORON. I know what I ought to believe ; and you will not disabuse my mind upon that subject, nor upon the debts which you have put off until you were married to my daughter.

POUR. Which debts ?

ORON. The pretence is useless ; and I have seen the Flemish merchant, who, with other creditors, obtained judgment against you eight months ago.

POUR. What Flemish merchant ? What creditors ? What judgment obtained against me ?

ORON. You know well enough what I mean.

SCENE VIII.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, ORONTE, LUCETTE, *pretending to be a woman from Languedoc*.<sup>20</sup>

LUC. Ah ! you are here, and I find you at last, after my many journeys in search of you. Can you bear to look me in the face, you scoundrel ?

POUR. What does this woman want ?

LUC. What do I want, you infamous wretch ! You pretend not to know me ; and you do not blush, rogue that you are, you do not blush to see me. (*To Oronte*). I do not know, Sir, whether it is you, as I have been told, whose daughter he wants to marry ; but I declare to you that I am his wife, and that seven years ago, when he was passing through Pézénas, he was artful enough, with his pretty speeches in which he is so clever, to gain my heart,

<sup>20</sup> In the original, Lucette talks a kind of Languedoc dialect, which it would be impossible to render into English. The first few sentences are as follows: "*Ah ! tu es assé, et à la fi yeu te trobi après abé fait tant de passés. Podes-tu, scélérat, podes-tu soustèni ma bisto . . . Que te boli infame ! Tu fas sembian de non me pas connouisse, et non rougisses pas, impudent, que tu sios, su ne rougisses pas de me beyre.*" Some commentators say that this is not the correct language of Languedoc ; but it has been justly observed that Lucette speaks Languedoc enough to deceive Pourceaugnac, and French enough to be understood by the spectators. Besides, Molière only says that she pretends to be a woman from Languedoc, but not that she is really one.

and, by these means, persuaded me to give him my hand in marriage.

ORON. Oh ! oh !

POUR. What the devil is this ?

LUC. The wretch left me three years afterwards, under the pretext of some business which took him to his country ; and since then I have had no tidings from him ; but when I was least thinking about it, they warned me that he was coming into this town to marry again another young girl which her parents had promised him, without knowing anything of his first marriage. I immediately left everything, and I have come hither as quickly as I could, to oppose this criminal union, and to unmask the most wicked of men before the eyes of the world.

POUR. This is a strange audacity !

LUC. Rascal ! are you not ashamed to insult me, instead of being confused by the secret reproaches which your conscience must make you ?

POUR. I, I am your husband ?

LUC. Infamous wretch ! dare you say the contrary ? Ah ! you know well enough, to my misfortune, that all which I say is but too true : and would to Heaven it were not, and that you had left me in the state of innocence and the tranquility of mind in which I lived before your charms and your deceits unfortunately made me leave it ! I would not then be obliged to cut the sorry figure which I do now, to see a cruel husband despise all the love I had for him ; and to leave me mercilessly to the mortal grief which I feel at his perfidious behaviour.

ORON. I cannot help crying. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Go, you are a wicked man.

POUR. I know nothing about all this.

SCENE IX.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, NÉRINE, LUCETTE, ORONTE.

NER.<sup>80</sup> (*counterfeiting a woman from Picardy*). Ah ! I

<sup>80</sup> The same observation which I have made in note 29, page 122, with regard to Lucette's dialect, applies to Nérine's, of which we give the first four sentences: "*Ah ! je n'en pis plus ; je sis tout essoffée ! Ah ! fin-faron, tu m'as bien fait courir ; tu ne m'écaperas mie. Justice ! justice ! je boutte empêchement au mariage. (à Oronte) Chés mon méri, monsieur, et je veux faire piedre che bon pindard-la.*"

am exhausted ; I am all out of breath ! Ah ; you braggart, you have led me a fine dance, but you shall not escape me. Justice ! justice ! I put a stop to this marriage. (*To Oronte*). He is my husband, Sir, and I mean to have the gallows-bird hanged.

POUR. What, another one !

ORON. (*Aside*). The devil, what sort of fellow is this ?

LUC. And what do you mean, with your putting a stop to, and your hanging ? Is that man your husband ?

NER. Yes, Madam, and I am his wife.

LUC. That is false, and it is I who am his wife ; and, if he is to be hanged, it is I who will have him hanged.

NER. I understand nothing of all this gibberish.

LUC. I tell you that I am his wife.

NER. His wife ?

LUC. Yes.

NER. I tell you once more that it is I who am his wife.

LUC. And I maintain that it is I.

NER. It is four years since he married me.

LUC. It is seven since he took me to wife.

NER. I have proofs of all that I say.

LUC. All my country knows it.

NER. Our town is witness to it.

LUC. All Pézénas saw our wedding.

NER. All St. Quentin was at ours.

LUC. Nothing can be more true.

NER. Nothing can be more certain.

LUC. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Would you dare to deny it, you villain ?

NER. Do you mean to give the lie to me, you wicked wretch ?

POUR. The one is as true as the other.

LUC. What impudence ! How now, you wretch, you remember no longer poor little François, and poor Jeannette, who are the fruits of our union ?

NER. Just look at the insolence ! What ! you do not remember that poor child, our little Madeline, which you left me as a pledge of your fidelity ?

POUR. What impudent sluts !

LUC. Come here François, come here Jeannette, come

all of you, come and show an unnatural father his want of feeling for us all.

NER. Come, Madeleine, come, my child, come here to shame your father for his impertinence.

SCENE X.—MONSIEUR POURCEAUGNAC, ORONTE, LUCETTE, NÉRINE, *several children*.

THE CHIL. Ah, papa! papa! papa!

POUR. The devil take the strumpet's brats!

LUC. What, you wretch, you are not overwhelmed with shame to receive your children thus, and to close your ears to all paternal tenderness! You shall not escape me, you infamous rogue! I shall follow you everywhere, and reproach you with your crime until I shall be revenged, and see you hanged. You scoundrel, I will have you hanged.

NER. Do you not blush to speak these words, and to remain insensible to the caresses of this poor child? But you shall not get out of my clutches; and, in spite of your teeth I shall let the world see that I am your wife; and I shall have you hanged.

THE CHIL. Papa! papa! papa!

POUR. Help! help! Where shall I fly? I can bear this no longer.

ORON. Come, you will do well to have him punished; and he deserves to be hanged.

SCENE XI.—SBRIGANI, *alone*.

I am managing these things very nicely, and everything goes well as yet. We shall tire our provincial to such an extent that upon my word, he will be obliged to decamp.

SCENE XII.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, SBRIGANI.

POUR. Ah! I am half dead! What troubles! What a cursed town! Set upon from all sides!

SBR. What is it, Sir? Has something else happened?

POUR. Yes. It rains syringes and women in this country.

SBR. How is that?

POUR. Two jabbering jades have come and accused me

of having married them both, and threaten me with the law.

SBR. That is a wicked business; and the law in these parts is very rigorous against that sort of crime.

POUR. Yes; but although there should be an information, citation, decree, and judgment obtained by surprise, default and contumacy, I can, by availing myself of a conflict of jurisdictions, gain time, and find out the flaws which shall nullify the proceedings.<sup>21</sup>

SBR. That is talking of it in the right terms, and it is clear, Sir, that you are of the profession.

POUR. I! not at all. I am a gentleman.

SBR. To speak thus you must have studied the law.

POUR. In no wise. It is only common sense which makes me conclude that justifying evidence will be admitted, and that I cannot be condemned on a simple accusation, without the witnesses being examined and confronted with the accused parties.

SBR. That is finer still.

POUR. These words come to me without my knowing it.

SBR. It seems to me that the common sense of a gentleman may go as far as to conceive what is right and proper in law, but not to know the legal terms.

POUR. These are a few words which I remember from having read them in novels.

SBR. Ah! that is all right!

POUR. To show you that I understand nothing at all of a lawyer's profession, I pray you to take me to some barrister to consult him about my business.

SBR. I shall do so, and shall take you to two very able men; but I must warn you beforehand not to be surprised at their way of speaking. They have contracted from the bar a certain habit of declamation which would lead one to suppose that they were singing, and you might mistake everything they say for music.

POUR. What does it matter how they speak, as long as they tell me what I wish to know!

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<sup>21</sup> The law terms "*information, ajournement, décret, jugement, défaut, contumace, and conflit de juridiction*," were all correct in Molière's time.



SCENE XIII.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, SBRIGANI,  
TWO BARRISTERS, TWO SOLICITORS, TWO SERGEANTS.

1st Bar. (*Drawling his words as he sings*)—

Polygamy is a business,  
Is a hanging business.

2d Bar. (*Singing very quickly, and stammering*)—

Your case  
Is plain and clear;  
And all the law  
In such a matter  
Decides distinctly.  
If you consult our authors,  
Legislators, and commentators,  
Justinianus, Pipinianus,  
Ulpianus, and Tribonianus,  
Fernand, Rebuffe, John Imola,  
Paul de Castro, Julianus, Bartholine,  
Jason, Alciati, and Cujas,  
That great man so able;  
Polygamy is a business,  
Is a hanging business.<sup>23</sup>

*Entry of the Ballet.*

*Dance of the Two Solicitors and the Two Sergeants.*

While the SECOND BARRISTER sings the following words :—

All people that are civilized  
And sensible,  
The French, the English, the Dutch,  
The Danes, the Swedes, the Poles,  
The Portuguese, the Spaniards, the Flemish,  
The Italians, the Germans,  
Have all a like law on this case;  
And there is no difficulty in the matter.

---

<sup>23</sup> The French comic dramatists and satirists have often mentioned the old jurists. Rebuffe is cited by Racine in *les Plaideurs*; Alciati, by Boileau in the *Lutrin*; and Jason, the least known of all, by Corneille in the *Menteur*. 'To study Bartholine or Cujas' was then a periphrase for "studying law."

Polygamy is a business,  
Is a hanging business.

*The First Barrister sings these words:—*

Polygamy is a business,  
Is a hanging business.  
*(Monsieur de Pourceaugnac getting impatient,  
drives them away.)*<sup>28</sup>

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ACT III.

SCENE I.—ERASTE, SBRIGANI.

SBR. Yes, matters are proceeding as we like; and as he is not particularly bright, and his understanding is of the narrowest, I have inspired him with such a great fear of the severity of the law in these parts, and of the preparations which are already being made for his execution, that he is determined to take flight, and to evade with greater facility the people, who I have told him were stationed at the gates of the town to arrest him, he has made up his mind to disguise himself, and the disguise which he has assumed is a woman's dress.

ERAS. I should like much to see him in that dress.

SBR. You, on your part, should think of finishing the comedy; and while I am acting my scenes with him, go and . . . *(He whispers something in his ear)*. You understand rightly?

ERAS. Yes.

SBR. And when I shall have put him where I wish . . . *(Whispers again)*.

ERAS. Very good.

SBR. And when the father shall have been warned by me . . . *(Whispers again)*.

ERAS. Things could not go on better.

SBR. Here comes our young lady. Go quickly, that we may not be seen together.

---

<sup>28</sup> In Molière's time, a bigamist was really condemned to death. In later times, he was put in the stocks, with as many distaffs tied to his arms as he had married wives, and then sent to the galleys, or banished.

SCENE II.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, *disguised as a woman*, SBRIGANI.

SBR. As for me, I do not believe that they ever could recognise you in this state; and as you are, you look like a woman of quality.

POUR. What astonishes me is that the forms of justice are not better observed in these parts.

SBR. Yes, I have already told you, they begin here by hanging a man, and then they judge his case.

POUR. That is very unjust justice.

SBR. It is devilishly severe, especially on these sorts of crimes.

POUR. But when people are innocent?

SBR. It matters not; they do not inquire into that; and besides, they have got a terrible hatred in this town for people from your country; and nothing gives them greater delight than to see a Limousin hanged.

POUR. What have the Limousins done to them?

SBR. They are brutes here, foes to all gentility and merit in those of other towns. As for me, I confess to you, that I am in very great fear for you; and I should never console myself if you were to be hanged.

POUR. It is not so much the fear of death that makes me run away, as that it is very damaging to a gentleman to be hanged and that an affair like that would ruin our title of nobility.<sup>24</sup>

SBR. You are right; they would afterwards dispute your title of esquire.<sup>25</sup> For the rest take great care, when I shall lead you by the hand, to walk like a woman, and to assume all the speech and manners of a person of quality.

POUR. Let me manage it. I have seen people of rank. The only thing is, that I have a bit of a beard.

SBR. Your beard is nothing; there are women who have as much as you. Come, let us see how you mean to set about it. (*After Monsieur Pourceaugnac has imitated a woman of quality*). Good.

POUR. Now then, my coach! Where is my carriage! Good Heavens! how wretched it is to have people like

<sup>24</sup> Nobles were formerly decapitated, commoners hanged.

<sup>25</sup> *Ecuyer*, esquire, was the lowest title of nobility.

that about one ! Will they keep me waiting the whole day in the street, and will my coach never come !

SBR. Very good.

POUR. Hullo ! ho ! coachman, little page ! Ah ! you little scamp,—I shall let you have a taste of the whip by-and-by ! Little page, page ! Where is my little page ? Will the little page never be found ? Will this page never come ? Have I not a little page left !

SBR. This is capital. But I notice one thing ; this hood is not close enough : I shall go and get one that is a little thicker, the better to conceal your face, in case of some meeting.

POUR. What will become of me in the meantime ?

SBR. Wait for me here. I shall be with you again in a moment, you have only to walk about. (*Monsieur de Pourceaugnac walks several times up and down the stage, always trying to imitate a woman of quality.*)

SCENE III.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, TWO SWISS.

1ST SWISS.<sup>28</sup> (*Not seeing Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.*) Come, make haste, mate ; we must both go to the Grève, to look for a little at the execution of this Monsieur de Pourceaugnac, who has been condemned to be hanged by the neck.

2ND. (*Without seeing Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.*) We must hire a window to see this execution.

1ST SWISS. They say that there is already a bran new gallows erected on which to hang this Pourceaugnac.

2D SWISS. It would, indeed, be a great pleasure to see this Limousin hung on it.

1ST SWISS. Yes, to see him kick up his heels before all the world.

2D SWISS. He is a funny fellow ; they say that he has been three times married.

1ST SWISS. What the devil did he want with three wives to himself ! one ought to have been enough for him.

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<sup>28</sup> See my observation, page 122, note 29. I give the first sentence in the original : "*Allons, dépêchons, camarade ; il faut aller tous deux nous à la Grève pour regarder un peu chousticier sti monsiu de Pourcagnac, qui l'a à été contant par ortonnance à l'être pendu par son cou.*"

2D SWISS. (*Perceiving Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Ah! good day, Miss.

1ST SWISS. What are you doing here all alone?

POUR. I am waiting for my servants, gentlemen

2D SWISS. Upon my word! she is pretty.

POUR. Gently, gentlemen.

1ST SWISS. Will you join us, Miss, to go to the Grève? We are going to see a nice little hanging.

POUR. I would rather not.

2D SWISS. It is a Limousin gentleman, who is to be hanged genteelly upon a great gallows.

POUR. I have no wish to see it.

1ST SWISS. There is a little breast which is nice.

POUR. Gently!

1ST SWISS. Upon my word, I should like to sleep with you.

POUR. Ah! this is too much! and these sorts of obscenities are not uttered to a woman of my rank.

2D SWISS. Leave off, you; I wish to sleep with her.

1ST SWISS. I do not choose to leave her alone.

2D SWISS. And I wish it.

*(The two Swiss pull Monsieur de Pourceaugnac about in a violent manner.)*

1ST SWISS. I am not doing anything.

2D SWISS. You are telling a lie.

1ST. Go away, you are telling a lie yourself.

POUR. Help! Guard!

SCENE IV. — MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, A POLICE-OFFICER,<sup>87</sup> TWO INFERIOR POLICE-OFFICERS,<sup>88</sup> TWO SWISS.

POL. O. What is the matter? What violence is this? and what do you want with this lady? Come, get away from this, unless you wish to be put into prison.

1ST SWISS. Go away, all right. You shall not have her.

2D SWISS. Go away, good; you shall not have her either.

<sup>87</sup> See Introductory Notice to *Tartuffe*, Vol. II.

<sup>88</sup> The original has *archer*, because the inferior police-officers formerly used to wear cross-bows.

## SCENE V.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, A POLICE-OFFICER, TWO INFERIOR POLICE-OFFICERS.

POUR. I am much obliged to you, Sir, for having freed me from these two insolent fellows.

POL. O. Hey-day ! His face looks very much like the one that has been described to me.

POUR. It is not I, I assure you.

POL. O. Ah ! ah ! what does I mean . .

POUR. I do not know.

POL. O. Why do you say so then ?

POUR. For nothing.

POL. O. This speech means something ; and I arrest you.

POUR. Pray ! Sir, pray !

POL. O. No, no ; to judge from your face and speech, you must be this Monsieur de Pourceaugnac of whom we are in search, and who is said to have disguised himself in this fashion ; you shall come to prison with us directly.

POUR. Alas !

## SCENE VI.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, SBRIGANI, A POLICE-OFFICER, TWO INFERIOR POLICE-OFFICERS.

SBR. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Good Heavens ! what means this ?

POUR. They have recognized me.

POL. O. Yes, yes ; I am delighted at it.

SBR. (*To the Police Officer*). Ah, Sir, for my sake ! You know that we are friends of old standing ; I beseech you not to take him to prison.

POL. O. No, no : that is impossible.

SBR. You are a man open to reason. Is there no way of adjusting this matter by means of some pistoles ?

POL. O. (*To the Inferior Police Officers*). Just leave us for a little while.

## SCENE VII.—MONSIEUR DE POURCEAUGNAC, SBRIGANI, THE POLICE-OFFICER.

SBR. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). You must give him some money to let you go. Make haste.

POUR. (*Handing some money to Sbrigani*). Ah! cursed town.

SBR. There, Sir.

POL. O. How much is there?

SBR. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

POL. O. No; my orders are too binding.

SBR. (*To the Police Officer, who wants to go away*). Good Heavens! just wait a moment. (*To Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*). Make haste; give him as much more.

POUR. But . . .

SBR. Make haste, I tell you, and lose no time. It would please you much, no doubt, to be hanged.

POUR. Ah! (*He hands more money to Sbrigani*).

SBR. (*To the Police Officer*). There, Sir.

POL. O. (*To Sbrigani*). I shall have to fly with him; for there is no security for me here. Let me conduct him, and do not stir from this.

SBR. I beseech you then to take great care of him.

POL. O. I promise you not to leave him, until I have put him in a place of safety.

POUR. (*To Sbrigani*). Good-bye. This is the only honest man whom I have found in this town.

SBR. Do lose no time. I love you so much, that I wish that you were already far from this. (*Alone*). May Heaven conduct you! On my word, this is a great gull. But here comes . . .

#### SCENE VIII.—ORONTE, SBRIGANI.

SBR. (*Pretending not to see Oronte*). Ah! what a strange adventure! What sad news for a father! Poor Oronte, how I pity you! What will you say? and how will you bear this mortal grief?

ORON. What is it? what misfortune do you prophesy to me? tell me.

SBR. Ah, Sir! this perfidious Limousin, this wretch of a Monsieur de Pourceaugnac abducts your daughter!

ORON. He abducts my daughter!

SBR. Yes. She has become so crazy, that she leaves

you to follow him ; and they say that he has got a talisman<sup>20</sup> for making himself beloved by all women.

ORON. Come, quick to the authorities ! Let us despatch the police-officers after them !

SCENE IX.—ORONTE, ÉRASTE, JULIA, SBRIGANI.

ERAS. (*To Julia.*) Come, you shall come in spite of yourself, and I shall place you safely again in the hands of your father. There, Sir, there is your daughter, whom by force I have dragged from the hands of the man with whom she was running away ; not from love for her, but solely out of respect for you. For, after what she has done, I can only despise her, and cure myself completely of the affection which I had for her.

ORON. Ah ! infamous girl that you are !

ERAS. (*To Julia.*) What ! treat me in that manner, after all the marks of affection which I have given you. I do not blame you for having submitted to the will of your father ; he is prudent and judicious in everything he does ; and I do not complain of him for having rejected me for another. If he broke the word which he had given me, he had no doubt his reasons for it. People made him believe that this other was richer than myself by four or five thousand crowns ; and four or five thousand crowns is a considerable sum, and which makes it worth while to break one's word. But to forget in a moment all the love which I have shown you, to allow yourself to be captivated by a new comer, and to follow him in a shameless manner, without your father's consent, and after the crimes which have been imputed to him, this must be condemned by every one, and for this my heart cannot make any sufficiently cutting reproaches.

JUL. Well, then ? yes. I have conceived a passion for him, and wished to follow him, because my father had chosen him as my husband, Whatever you may say to me, he is a very honourable man ; and all the crimes of which he is accused are horrible falsehoods.

ORON. Hold your tongue ; you are an impudent jade ; I know better than you what he is.

<sup>20</sup> The original has *un caractère*. See *Amphitryon*, Vol. II., page 506, note 31.



JUL. They are, no doubt, tricks which have been played upon him, and (*Pointing to Eraste*) it is perhaps he who invented this artifice to disgust you with him.

ERAS. I! could I be capable of such a thing?

JUL. Yes, you.

ORON. Hold your tongue, I tell you; you are a fool.

ERAS. No, no, do not think that I have the least desire to interfere with this marriage, and that it is my passion which has made me run after you. I have already told you that it is only from consideration for your father; and I could not bear that an honourable man like him should be exposed to the shameful scandal which a step like yours might entail.

ORON. I am infinitely obliged to you Mr. Éraste.

ERAS. Good-by, Sir. I had the greatest wish in the world to become related to you; I have done all that I could to obtain such an honour; but I have been unfortunate, and you did not think me worthy of such favour. This shall not prevent me from entertaining towards you the feelings of esteem and veneration which your person compels; and if I could not succeed in becoming your son-in-law, I at least can be for ever your servant.

ORON. Stay, Mr. Éraste; your behaviour touches my heart, and I give you my daughter in marriage.

JUL. I will have no other husband than Monsieur de Pourceaugnac.

ORON. And I, I will have you accept Mr. Éraste on the spot. Come, your hand.

JUL. No, I shall not do so.

ORON. I shall box your ears.

ERAS. No, no, Sir; do not use violence, I beseech you.

ORON. It is for her to obey, and I will show her that I am the master

ERAS. Do you not see the love she has for that man? and do you wish me to possess her person, while another shall possess her heart?

ORON. He has bewitched her, and you will see that she will change her opinions shortly. Give me your hand. Come?

JUL. I will not. . . .

ORON. Ah! what a noise! Come, your hand, I tell you. Ah! ah! ah!

ERAS. (*To Julia*). Do not think that it is for love of you that I give you my hand; I am smitten only with your father; and it is he whom I marry.

ORON. I am much obliged to you; and I add ten thousand crowns to the marriage portion of my daughter. Come, let them bring the notary to draw up the contract.<sup>40</sup>

ERAS. While awaiting his arrival, we may enjoy the entertainment of the season; and usher in the masks, whom the noise of Monsieur de Pourceaugnac's nuptials has attracted here from all parts of the town.

SCENE X.—*A troop of Masks singing and dancing. Some are on balconies, others in the street, and by divers songs and games, try to enjoy innocent pleasures.*

A MASC. (*dressed as a female gipsy.*) —

Begone, begone from this spot,  
Sorrow, Grief, and Sadness;  
Come, come, Laughter and Play,  
Pleasure, Love and Tenderness;  
Let us think of nothing else but joy,  
Let pleasure be our sole aim.

CHORUS OF SINGING MASKS.—

Let us think of nothing else but joy  
Let pleasure be our sole aim.

F. GIP. To follow me all here  
Your ardour is uncommon;  
And you are in grief  
About your love:  
Be always in love,  
It is the way to be happy.

A MASK (*dressed as a gipsy.*) —

Let us love till death;  
Reason tells us to do so.  
Alas! what would be life

---

<sup>40</sup> It is customary to end the piece here, but to enliven it a little, M. de Pourceaugnac, dressed as a woman, appears in one of the boxes, makes a friendly gesture to Sbrigani, and recommends him to come and see him, if ever he goes to Limoges. This ending is traditional at the *Comédie Française*, and allows the curtain to fall amidst roars of laughter.

If people loved no more?  
Ah! let us rather lose life  
Than lose our love.

BOTH (*in dialogue*)—

All treasures.

F. GIP. Glory.

M. GIP. Grandeur.

F. GIP. The sceptres that cause such envy.

M. GIP. All is nothing, if love does not infuse its  
ardour.

F. GIP. Without love, there is no joy in life.

*The two together—*

Let us always be in love,  
It is the way of being happy.

*Chorus.* Let us all sing together,  
And dance, and jump, and merry be.

*A Mask (dressed as a noble Venetian)—*

When for laughter we are assembled  
The wisest are those, it seems to me,  
Who play the greatest fools.

*All together—*

Let us think of nothing else but joy,  
Let pleasure be our sole aim.

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

Dance of two Old Women, two Scaramouches, two Pantalons,  
two Doctors, and two Peasants.

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

Dance of Savages.

*Third Entry of the Ballet.*

Dance of Biscayens.

Roll

LES AMANTS MAGNIFIQUES.

COMÉDIE-BALLET.

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THE MAGNIFICENT LOVERS.

A COMEDY-BALLET IN FIVE ACTS.

*(THE COMEDY IN PROSE, THE INTERLUDES IN VERSE.)*

FEBRUARY 4TH, 1670.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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ON the 4th of February 1670 was represented at Saint Germain-en-Laye, before the King and the whole Court, *The Magnificent Lovers*—of which "his Majesty chose the subject." For this reason it was called, with the interludes, *The Divertissement Royal*. Louis XIV. danced, in the first interlude, the part of Neptune, and that of Apollo in the sixth; but only during the first representation of the play.<sup>1</sup> It was never represented at Paris, and was printed only after Molière's death, in the first collected edition of his works. It has no particular merit, as far as I can see, and seems to be borrowed from the same source as Corneille's *Don Sancho of Arragon*.

In the two plays, a man of inferior birth is in love with, and beloved by a princess whose hand is sought by two rivals; but Don Sancho, before his marriage, is discovered to be a King's son, whilst Sostrates, Molière's hero, remains his own ancestor. The expenses for the machinery of this play were considerable; the engineer de Vigarani received 27,092 livres, while 16,000 livres were spent for the entertainment and salary of Molière's troupe and assistants for the 4th of February only.

In a little book just published<sup>2</sup> I find an account of the expenses of the representation of *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, as given at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the 6th of March, 1670, as well as of the two last representations of *The Magnificent Lovers*, given at the same place. Every article is mentioned there, even the price of the carriage which brought Molière from Paris to Saint-Germain and back again; the cost of the dresses of the *danseuses*; the sum paid for the cravats, breeches, stockings, dancing pumps, garters, scarfs, ribands, gloves, wigs, beards, and even the pomatum and powder for the chief actors, as well as for the supernumeraries. The cost of printing 1700 ordinary books of the ballet is also given, as well as that of 280 books for the King, the royal family, and their immediate followers,—which latter *libretti* were in marble covers, and ornamented with ribands. Among the different items specified, I find one for glasses, bottles, bread, wine, &c.; one for the horses' feed; one for the carriage of personal luggage and musical instruments; and even one for the door-

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<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II., page 300, note 7.

<sup>2</sup> Emile Campardon, *Nouvelles Pièces sur Molière*, &c., 1876, pp. 92-103.

keepers ; the whole, certified by Louis-Marie d'Aumont de Rochebaron, Duke and Peer of France, First Gentleman of the Chamber of the King, at 16,808 livres 2 sols. On the 6th of September of the same year, *The Magnificent Lovers* was played before the Duke of Buckingham, in a theatre built on purpose, and at a cost of about 9000 livres.

Molière was now the regular provider of Court entertainments, and of the plays in this volume, four were written for the special delectation of Louis XIV., then thirty-one years old, and at the height of his lustful and gluttonous appetites. The King had become at this time so infatuated with his ideas of royal dignity, so saturated with the nauseous flattery of his courtiers, so thoroughly convinced that he could do whatever he wished to do, that he probably thought he was really conferring a favour on Molière when he chose a subject for his play. But kings are seldom good *collaborateurs*, and the *Grand Monarque* proved no exception to this rule ; hence *The Magnificent Lovers* is perhaps the least able play of Molière.

Still it is not wholly without talent ; Clitidas is something like Moron, the Court fool from *The Princess of Elis* (See Vol. II., page 35), another comedy written by order of Louis XIV., and certainly not one of Molière's best ; and Anaxarchus, as the astrologer, with his tricks and sham-Venus, with his taking money from two rivals, and promising both of them to favour their suits, is very amusing. Astrology had not completely gone out of fashion, for an astrologer drew Louis XIV.'s horoscope, officially, at his birth ; and about twenty years before this play had been represented, a certain physician Morin, who had abandoned the practice of medicine for that of astrology,—thinking, perhaps, that there was less guess-work in the latter science than in the first—was the honoured correspondent of the celebrated Descartes, and of many, I shall not say high-born, but highly intellectual, people of the time. He lost, however, a great deal of his influence by predicting the death of the well-known philosopher Gassendi, who, however, did not die until five years afterwards.

The *Divertissement Royal* was acted again on the 13th and 17th of February, and on the 4th and 8th of March of the year 1670, and had the honour of being officially described in an Extraordinary Gazette. We shall give only the beginning of that description :—

“ Let people not boast any longer about the Olympic games and the other amusements of the Greeks, nor about the Circuses and other spectacles of the Romans. Those, which have been the best organized and the most brilliant, ought to lose all the reputation which history has given them when compared to the festivals of the first Court of the world . . . All grace and gallantry have been reserved for the rejoicings of a monarch who serves in this as an example even to the most polished princes of his century, and who is the first in the fine manner of these amusements, as he is the greatest in power and in glory ; and who, in short, does not understand less to honour the days of peace which he has so generously given to Europe, by surprising magnificences and rejoicings, than in displaying in war victories and conquests wholly marvellous. This is proved by many festivals which he has already given to his Court, in which nothing has been seen but what was extraordinary and worthy of being described for posterity ; and this has been confirmed by this last amusement with which his Majesty has wished to treat his Court during this carnival, in the interval of the great cares which He incessantly takes for the happiness of his peoples and for the glory of his State.”



It has been said that Benserade, who had until lately written the verses for the ballets danced by the King.—verses in which there was always some political, courtly, or amorous allusion,—and who had abdicated his official Court-poet position in the month of February of the year before, felt rather annoyed when Molière took his place. On having been told, probably before the play was represented, two lines of the third interlude, "And trace on the verdure the image of our songs," he said aloud that it ought to be "the image of our dancing-pumps," playing on the similarity between the words *chansons*, songs, and *chaussons*, dancing-pumps. When the verses on the King representing Neptune, in the first interlude, and those on the King representing the Sun, in the sixth, were read the courtiers, who were ignorant that Benserade had not composed these couplets, complimented the latter on his elegant diction; and this gentleman did not deny the impeachment, until Molière declared that he had written them, to the great confusion of the discomfited pretender. Another rumour of the period says that Molière wished to parody Benserade's style and manner; but this is more than doubtful, for to ridicule the praises bestowed on Louis XIV., and to say in a spirit of irony "that virtue never suffers shipwreck" with the King, would undoubtedly have ended seriously for our dramatist.

It has also been mentioned that Mademoiselle de Montpensier, then forty years old, a niece of the King, wished to marry the Count de Lauzun, and that Molière knew of this, and endeavoured to predispose the minds of the courtly public by sketching the love of the high-born Princess Eriphila for the low-born general Sostrates. This is possible; for *The Magnificent Rivals* was played on the 4th of February 1670, and it was only at the end of that year that Mademoiselle de Montpensier mentioned her project to the King, who gave his consent to the marriage on the 15th of December, and withdrew it on the 18th of the same month. But is it not natural to suppose that Mademoiselle de Montpensier, after seeing the play of Molière, may have plucked up courage to inform the *Grand Monarque* of her proposed espousal?

Wonderful to relate, nothing has been borrowed from this play by English dramatists, at least as far as I have been able to trace.



## PREFACE.

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The King who will have nothing but what is extraordinary in all that he undertakes, proposed to give his court a diversion made up of all those that the stage could furnish; and, to take in so vast an idea, and chain together so many different things, His Majesty chose for the subject two rival princes, who, in the Vale of Tempe, where the Pythian games were to be celebrated, vie with each other in treating a young princess and her mother with all the gallantries that could be thought of.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### IN THE COMEDY.

IPHICRATES, *a prince, in love with Eriphila.*  
TIMOCLES, *a prince, in love with Eriphila.*  
SOSTRATES, *a general in the army, in love with Eriphila.*  
ANAXARCHUS, *an astrologer.*  
CLÉON, *his son.*  
CHOREBUS, *in the suite of Aristione.*  
CLITIDAS, *a court jester, among the attendants of Eriphila.*<sup>3</sup>  
ARISTIONE, *a princess, mother to Eriphila.*  
ERIPHILA, *a princess, her daughter.*  
CLEONICE, *her confidante.*  
A SHAM VENUS, *in concert with Anaxarchus.*

### IN THE INTERLUDES.

#### *First Interlude.*

EOLUS, SINGING TRITONS, SINGING STREAMS, SINGING CUPIDS, DANCING CORAL-FISHERS, NEPTUNE, SIX SEA-DEITIES (*dancing*).

#### *Second Interlude.*

THREE DANCING MIMES.

#### *Third Interlude.*

THE NYMPH OF THE VALLEY OF TEMPE.

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<sup>3</sup>This part was played by Molière. In the inventory taken after his death, we find "a theatrical classical cuirass (*tonnelet*), a chemisette, a skirt, a pair of drawers and cuishes; the above cuirass of green moire, ornamented with two kinds of lace, gold and silver; the chemisette of velvet with a gold ground; the shoes, garters, stockings, scallops, ruff and ruffles. the whole ornamented with fine silver."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.—*Continued.*

IN THE PASTORAL.

*Musical.*

TIRCIS, <i>a shepherd, in love with Caliste.</i>	PHILINTE, <i>a shepherd.</i>
LYCASTE, <i>a shepherd, his friend.</i>	SIX DANCING FAWNS.
MENANDER, <i>a shepherd, his friend.</i>	THREE SMALL DANCING FAWNS.
FIRST SATYR, <i>in love with Caliste.</i>	CALISTE, <i>a shepherdess.</i>
SECOND SATYR, <i>in love with Caliste.</i>	CLIMÈNE, <i>a shepherdess.</i>
	SIX DANCING DRYADS.
	THREE SMALL DANCING DRYADS.

*Fourth Interlude.*

EIGHT DANCING STATUES.

*Fifth Interlude.*

FOUR DANCING MIMES.

*Sixth Interlude.*

FEAST OF THE PYTHIAN GAMES.

*The priestess, two singing sacrificers, six ministers of the sacrifice (carrying hatchets, dancing), chorus of people, six acrobats (on wooden horses), four slave leaders (dancing), eight dancing slaves; four men in Greek dresses, four women in Greek dresses, a herald, six trumpeters, a cup-bearer, Apollo, attendants on Apollo, dancing.*

*Scene.*—THESSALY, IN THE VALE OF TEMPE.

## THE MAGNIFICENT LOVERS.

(LES AMANTS MAGNIFIQUES.)

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### FIRST INTERLUDE.

*The scene opens with the pleasant sound of a quantity of instruments; and represents at first a sea bordered on each side by four large rocks. On the summit of each is a River-god leaning upon the insignia of these kinds of deities. At the foot of these rocks are twelve Tritons on each side; and in the middle of the sea, four Cupids on dolphins, and behind them the god Eolus, floating on a small cloud above the waves. Eolus commands the winds to withdraw; and while the four Cupids, twelve Tritons, and eight River-gods answer him, the sea becomes calm, and an island rises from the waves. Eight fishermen come out of the sea with mother of pearl and branches of coral in their hands, and, after a charming dance, seat themselves each on a rock above a River-god. The musical chorus announces the advent of Neptune; and while this god is dancing with his suite, the fishermen, Tritons, and River-gods accompany his steps with various movements, and the clattering of the pearl shells. The whole of this spectacle is a splendid compliment paid by one of the princes to the princesses during their maritime excursion.*

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

Neptune and Six Sea-gods.

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

Eight Coral Fishers.

VERSES SUNG.

*Recital of Eolus.*

Ye winds, who trouble the fairest days,  
 Retire into your deepest grottos;  
 And leave the Cupids and the Zephyrs  
 To reign over the waves.

*A Triton.*

What charming eyes have penetrated to our moist abodes?  
 Come, come, ye Tritons; hide yourselves, ye Nereids.

*All the Tritons.*

Let us all advance to meet these divinities;  
 And to their charms let us render homage by our songs.

*A Cupid.*

Ah! How fair are these princesses!

*Another Cupid.*

What hearts could withstand them?

*Another Cupid.*

The fairest of immortals,  
 Our mother has less charms than they.

*Chorus*

Let us all advance to meet these divinities;  
 And to their charms let us render homage by our songs.

*A Triton.*

What noble spectacle now meets our eyes?  
 Neptune, the great god Neptune, with his court,  
 Comes with his august presence  
 To shed honour on this charming spot.



*Chorus.*

Let us our songs increase  
And make the air resound  
With our rejoicings.

*Verses for the king, representing Neptune.*

Heaven, among the most renowned,  
Has given me a considerable rank;  
And in vesting me with sway over the azure waves,  
Renders my power feared by the whole universe.

There is no land, if it look well at me,  
But what must tremble at my spreading over it;  
No state but what at any moment I could inundate  
With the impetuous waves which my power commands.

Nothing could stay their fierce overflow;  
And if a threefold dyke opposes their force,  
We would see them break down the obstacle,  
And easily clear for themselves a way anywhere.

But I know how to curb the fury of these waves  
By the wise equity of the power I wield,  
And to maintain everywhere, to the sailors' delight,  
The sweet liberties of a peaceful commerce.

Sometimes there are shoals found in my States;  
We perceive that some vessels are lost there by storms;  
But against my power there is no murmuring,  
And with me virtue never suffers shipwreck.<sup>4</sup>

*For M. Le Grand, representing a sea-god.*

The empire in which we live is fertile in treasures.  
All mortals in crowds rush to its banks.  
And, to make in a short time a very great fortune,  
We need nothing but the favour of Neptune.

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<sup>4</sup> It has been said that our author parodied in the above verses the way in which Benserade wrote his poetic flatteries, but we doubt if Molière would have dared to have taken this liberty. See Introductory Notice.

*For M. the Marquis De Villeroi, representing a sea-god.*

On the word of this god of the watery empire,  
We may safely embark with all assurance.  
The waves themselves may inconstant be,  
Not so Neptune, he is ever constant.

*For M. the Marquis De Rassent, representing a sea-god.*

Journey on this sea with indomitable zeal;  
These are the means to curry favour with Neptune.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—SOSTRATES, CLITIDAS.

CLIT. (*Aside*). He is buried in thought.

Sos. (*Believing himself alone*). No, Sostrates, I see nothing to which you can have recourse, and your ills are of such a nature as to leave you no hope of getting rid of them.

CLIT. (*Aside*). He argues with himself.

Sos. (*Believing himself alone*). Alas!

CLIT. (*Aside*). These are sighs that mean something, and my conjectures may become true.

Sos. (*Believing himself alone*). On what fancies, tell me, could you build any hope, and what else stares you in the face but a horrible, protracted and wretched life, and annoyances to be ended only by death?

CLIT. (*Aside*). This head is more confused than my own.

Sos. (*Believing himself alone*). Ah! my heart! ah! my heart! to what have you brought me?

CLIT. Your servant, my lord Sostrates.

Sos. Where go you, Clitidas?

CLIT. But you rather, what are you doing here? and what secret melancholy, what sombre humour, if it please you, retains you in these woods, while every one is rushing to the magnificent festival with which the love of prince Iphicrates is regaling the maritime excursion of the princesses; while they are receiving marvellous entertainments of music and dancing, and while even the rocks and the

waves deck themselves with divinities to do honour to their charms?

Sos. Without seeing it, I can imagine this magnificence well enough; and, as a rule, so many people are anxious to add to the crowds at these festivals, that I have thought it right not to augment the number of nuisances.

CLIT. You know well enough that your presence never spoils anything, and that you are never one too many, no matter where you go. Your countenance is welcome everywhere; and it is not one of these ill-favoured countenances which are never well received by sovereign looks. You stand equally well with the two princesses; and the mother and the daughter show you sufficiently the esteem in which they hold you, to prevent all dread of your tiring their sight; and, in short, it is not that fear which has kept you back.

Sos. I confess that I have no great natural curiosity for these kind of things.

CLIT. Good Heavens! even if one had no curiosity for these things, one has always somewhere to go where one finds everybody else; and, whatever you may say, people do not remain all alone, during a festival dreaming among the trees, as you do, without having something on their minds that troubles them.

Sos. What should I have on my mind?

CLIT. Ay, I do not know where it comes from; but there is a scent of love somewhere here. It is not I. Ah! upon my word, it is you.

Sos. How foolish you are, Clitidas!

CLIT. I am not foolish. You are in love; I have a delicate nose, and I smelt it directly.

Sos. On what do you found this idea?

CLIT. On what? You would be very much surprised if I told you, besides, with whom you are in love.

Sos. I?

CLIT. Yes. I wager that I shall guess on the spot the one whom you love. I have my secrets as well as our astrologer, with whom the princess Aristione is so taken up; and, if he be possessed of the science of reading in the stars the fate of men, I possess the one of being able to read in the eyes the name of the person with whom one

is in love. Hold up your head a little, and open your eyes. E, making a syllable by itself;<sup>6</sup> e, r, i, eri; p, h, i, phi; l, a, la; Eriphila. You are in love with the princess Eriphila.

Sos. Ah! Clitidas, I confess that I cannot conceal my trouble, and you strike me with a thunderbolt.

CLIT. Do you see how clever I am!

Sos. Alas! if, by some accident, you have been able to discover the secret of my heart, I beseech you at least not to reveal it to any one, and above all to keep it concealed from the fair princess whose name you have just mentioned.

CLIT. And, seriously speaking, if I have been able from your actions for some time to find out the passion which you wish to keep secret, do you think that the princess Eriphila could have been so obtuse as not to perceive it? The fair, believe me, are always the most clear-sighted in discovering the passions which they inspire; and the language of the eyes and of sighs is better understood than any other by the one to whom it is addressed.

Sos. Let us leave her, Clitidas, let us leave her to perceive, if she can, in my sighs and looks, the passion with which her charms have inspired me; but let us take great care that she never find it out in any other way.

CLIT. And what do you dread? Is it possible that this same Sostrates, who feared neither Brennus nor all the Gauls, and whose arm has so gloriously contributed to rid us of that deluge of barbarians which ravaged Greece; is it possible, I say, that a man so dauntless in war can be so timid in love, and that I see him tremble at the very mention that he does love?

Sos. Ah! Clitidas, I tremble with reason; and all the Gauls in the world are much less to be dreaded than two beautiful eyes full of charms.

CLIT. I am not of that opinion; and I know well, as far as I am concerned, that one single Gaul, sword in hand, would make me tremble more than fifty beautiful eyes, though they were altogether the most charming in

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<sup>6</sup> In the original *per soi*, being an old formula for "making a syllable by itself."

the world. But, just tell me, what do you intend to do?

Sos. To die without declaring my passion.

CLIT. That is a fair prospect! Come, come, you are jesting; a little boldness always succeeds with lovers: the bashful only lose in the game of love; and I would declare my passion to a goddess, if I fell in love with her.

Sos. Too many things, alas! condemn my passion to eternal silence.

CLIT. Eh! what?

Sos. The humbleness of my condition, with which it pleases Heaven to abate the ambition of my love; the rank of the princess, which puts between her and my desires a distance so vexatious; the rivalry of two princes supported by all the great titles, which can sustain the pretensions of their affection; of two princes disputing with each other at every moment, through many thousand splendours, the glory of winning her, and whose love we expect daily to be decided by her choice; but more than all, Clitidas, that inviolable respect with which her beautiful eyes subjugate all the violence of my passion.

CLIT. Respect very often does not lay us under the many obligations that love does; and unless I am very much mistaken, the young princess is aware of your affection, and is not insensible to it.

Sos. Ah! Do not endeavour to flatter out of pity the heart of a poor wretch.

CLIT. My conjecture is well founded. I see her postpone the choice of a husband for a long time, and I wish to find out something of this little matter. You know that I am somewhat in favour with her, that I have free access to her, and that by giving myself a deal of trouble, I have acquired the privilege of mixing in the conversation, and of speaking at random upon all subjects. Sometimes it does not succeed, but again at times it does. Let me manage it; I am one of your friends; people of merit gain my heart, and I shall watch my time to entertain the princess with . . .

Sos. Ah! for pity's sake, with whatever kindness my misfortune may inspire you, be very careful not to tell her anything of my passion. I would rather die than lay myself

open to be accused by her of the slightest impertinence ; and this profound respect with which her divine charms . . .

CLIT. Silence, here comes everyone.

SCENE II.—ARISTIONE, IPHICRATES, TIMOCLES, SOSTRATES, ANAXARCHUS, CLÉON, CLITIDAS.

ARIS. (*To Iphicrates*). Prince, I cannot get tired of saying so, that there has never been a spectacle in the universe to vie in magnificence with the one which you have just given us. This festival has had some decorations which, without doubt, surpass everything which one could see ; and it has shown us something so noble, so grand, and so majestic, that Heaven itself could no farther go ; and I can say with confidence that there is nothing in the universe that could equal it.

TIM. They are decorations with which we could not expect every vessel to be adorned ; and I have reason to fear, Madam, for the simplicity of the little entertainment which I am preparing for you in the wood of Diana.

ARIS. I think that we shall see nothing there but what is very agreeable ; and we must certainly admit that the country ought to appear beautiful to us, and that we have had no time to become weary in this charming spot, which all the poets have celebrated under the name of Tempe. For, after all, not to speak of the pleasures of the chase which we can enjoy at any hour, and of the solemnity of the Pythian games which are about to be celebrated, you both take care to glut us with all the entertainments that can charm the most melancholy grief. How is it Sostrates that we did not see you at our maritime excursion ?

SOS. Madam, a slight indisposition prevented me from going there.

IPHIC. Sostrates is one of those men, Madam, who think it unbecoming to be curious like others ; and it is nice to affect not to go where everyone goes.

SOS. My Lord, affectation has no share whatever in aught that I do ; and, without wishing to compliment you, there were things at this entertainment which could have attracted me, if some other cause had not detained me.

ARIS. And has Clitidas seen it all ?

CLIT. Yes, Madam, but from the banks.

ARIS. And why from the banks?

CLIT. Really, Madam, I was afraid of one of those accidents which generally occur in these confusions. Last night I dreamt of dead fishes and broken eggs;<sup>6</sup> and I have gleaned from Anaxarchus that broken eggs and dead fishes mean mishap.

ANAX. I always remark one thing; that Clitidas would have nothing to say, if he did not speak of me.

CLIT. It is because there are so many things to say of you that one cannot speak enough of them.

ANAX. You might choose some different subjects of conversation, since I have asked you to do so.

CLIT. But how can I? Do not you say that destiny is stronger than everything? and if it be written in the stars that I should be inclined to speak of you, how would you have me resist my fate?

ANAX. With all due respect to you, Madam, there is something that is very annoying at your court, that every one there takes the liberty of speaking, and that the most honourable man is exposed to the raillery of the first spiteful wag whom he meets.

CLIT. I thank you for the compliment.

ARIS. (*To Anaxarchus*). How foolish of you to fret yourself about what he says.

CLIT. With every respect for you, Madam, there is one thing that astonishes me in astrology: how people who know all the secrets of the gods, and who possess the knowledge to place themselves above all men, should be in need of paying court, and of asking for something.

ANAX. You ought to earn your money a little better, and utter some wittier jokes to this lady.

CLIT. Upon my word, one gives them as one can. It is very easy for you to speak thus; and the trade of a wit is not like that of an astrologer: to tell lies well, and to tell jokes well are two very different things; and it is far easier to deceive people than to make them laugh.

ARIS. Eh! what does this mean?

CLIT. (*Speaking to himself*). Peace, impertinent fellow

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<sup>6</sup> See *The Love-Tiff*, Vol. I., page 127, note 23, about the dreaming of "broken eggs."

that you are ! do not you know that astrology is an affair of State, and that you must not touch upon that point ? I have told you so several times, you are too forward, and you are taking certain liberties which will play you a scurvy trick, I warrant you. You will find that one of these days you will be kicked out, and that you will be bundled off like a rogue. Hold your tongue if you be wise.

ARIS. Where is my daughter ?

TIM. She has strolled away, Madam ; and I offered her my arm, which she refused to accept.

ARIS. Princes, since the affection which you have for Eriphila has been content to submit itself to the laws which it has been my pleasure to impose upon you ; since I have been able to obtain from you that you should be rivals without becoming enemies, and that with full submission to the sentiments of my daughter you are awaiting a choice in which I have left her sole mistress, open to me, both of you, the recesses of your minds, and tell me truly what progress you think you have made on her heart.

TIM. Madam, I will not flatter myself. I have done all I could to move the heart of the princess Eriphila, and I have set about it, I believe, in every tender way that a lover could adopt. I have rendered her the submissive homage of my affection ; I have shown assiduity ; I have paid my attentions every day ; I have ordered my passion to be sung to her with the most melting voices, and have given it expression in verses composed for me by the most delicate of pens ; I have complained of my martyrdom in the most impassioned terms ; I have made my eyes as well as my lips speak of the despair of my love ; I have uttered languishing sighs at her feet ; I have even shed tears ; but all that was useless, and I am not aware that in her heart she reciprocates my love.

ARIS. And you, prince ?

IPH. As for me, Madam, knowing her indifference, and the little value which she sets upon the attentions paid to her, I did not wish to waste complaints, sighs, or tears upon her. I know that she is entirely submissive to your wishes, and that it is from your hand alone that she will



accept a husband ; thus, it is only to you that I address myself to obtain her ; to you rather than to her that I offer all my attentions and all my homage. And would to Heaven, Madam, that you could have resolved to take her place ; that you had been willing to enjoy the conquests which you make for her, and to receive for yourself the affection which you refer to her !

ARIS. Prince, the compliment is that of a skilful lover, and you have heard it said that one must cajole the mothers in order to obtain the daughters ; but, in this case, unfortunately, all that becomes of no use, and I have bound myself to leave the choice entirely to the inclination of my daughter.

IPH. With whatever power you may have invested her for this choice, it is not a compliment, Madam, that I have uttered to you. I pretend to the princess Eriphila only because she is of your blood ; I find her charming through everything which she derives from you, and it is you whom I adore in her.

ARIS. That is very pretty.

IPH. Yes, Madam, every one sees in you attractions and charms, which I . . .

ARIS. Pray, prince, let us leave those charms and attractions ; you know that they are words which I eliminate from the compliments which people wish to pay me. I allow folks to praise my sincerity ; to say that I am a worthy princess, that I have a good word for everybody, a warm feeling for my friends, and esteem for merit and virtue ; I can digest all that, but as for charms and attractions, I am very glad that they are not served up to me ; and whatever truth there may be found in them, one must have some scruple in tasting praises, when one is mother to a daughter like mine.

IPH. Ah ! Madam, it is you who will play the mother in spite of all the world ; there is not an eye that does not oppose itself to it ; and if you wished it, the princess Eriphila might pass for your sister.

ARIS. Good Heavens ! prince, I have no taste for all this nonsense which most women like : I wish to be a mother because I am one, and it would be in vain not to wish it. This title has nothing to shock me, since, with

my own consent, I have exposed myself to receive it. This is a weakness of our sex, from which, thank Heaven, I am exempt; and I do not trouble myself about these grand disputes about age, so common with many foolish women. Let us come back to our conversation. Is it possible that up till now you have been unable to find out which way the inclination of Eriphila tends?

IPH. It is a mystery to me.

TIM. And to me an impenetrable one.

ARIS. Modesty perhaps hinders her from explaining herself to you and to me. Let us make use of some one else to find out the secret of her heart. Sostrates, do this for me, and render this good office to these princes, to discover skilfully from my daughter towards which of the two her feelings may turn.

SOS. Madam, you have a hundred persons at your court on whom you might better bestow the honour of such a task; and I feel myself ill-fitted to execute what you desire of me.

ARIS. Your merit, Sostrates, is not confined to the employment of war only; you have brain, aptitude, skill; and my daughter sets store by you.

SOS. Some one better than I, Madam . . .

ARIS. No, no; your refusal is useless.

SOS. Since it is your wish, Madam, I must obey; but I swear to you that, in all your court, you could not have chosen any one who would not have been able to acquit himself far better than I can of such a commission.

ARIS. You are too modest; and you will always acquit yourself well of whatever you may be charged with. Gently find out the sentiments of Eriphila, and make her remember that she is to go in good time to the wood of Diana.

SCENE III.—IPHICRATES, TIMOCLES, SOSTRATES, CLITIDAS.

IPH. (*To Sostrates*). Rest assured that I share in the esteem which the princess shows you.

TIM. (*To Sostrates*.) Rest assured that I am delighted at the choice that has been made of you.

IPH. Now you are in a position to serve your friends.

TIM. You have now the means of rendering good service to the people whom it may please you to serve.

IPH. I do not commend my interests to you.

TIM. I do not ask you to speak for me.

SOS. It would be useless, gentlemen. I should be wrong to exceed my orders; and you will not think it amiss if I speak neither for the one nor the other.

IPH. I leave you to do as you please.

TIM. You shall act as you judge best.

SCENE IV.—IPHICRATES, TIMOCLES, CLITIDAS.

IPH. (*Aside to Clitidas*). Will Clitidas be kind enough to remember that he is one of my friends; I recommend him always to forward my interests with his mistress against those of my rival.

CLIT. (*Aside to Iphicrates*). Let me manage it. There is no comparison between you and him! and he is a finely-built prince to dispute her with you.

IPH. (*Aside to Clitidas*). I shall remember this service.

SCENE V.—TIMOCLES, CLITIDAS.

TIM. My rival pays his court to Clitidas; but Clitidas knows well that he has promised me to support the pretensions of my love.

CLIT. Assuredly; and he is but jesting to think to gain the day over you. A nice specimen of a prince he is, compared with you!

TIM. There is nothing which I could refuse to Clitidas.

CLIT. (*Alone*). Sweet words on all sides! Here comes the princess; I shall watch my opportunity of speaking to her.

SCENE VI.—ERIPHILA, CLÉONICE.

CLE. People will think it strange, Madam, that you have thus strolled away from every one.

ERI. Ah! how agreeable a little solitude sometimes is to persons like us, who are always pestered with so many people! and how sweet it is, after a thousand impertinent conversations to commune with one's own thoughts! Let me walk here all alone.

CLE. Would you not like, Madam, to see a little specimen of the agility of these admirable personages, who wish to enter your service. They are people who, by their steps, their gestures and movements, express everything to the eye; and we call them pantomimists? I have trembled to say this word to you;¹ and there are people in your court who would not forgive me for it.

ERI. You look to me much, Cléonice, as if you intended to treat me here to an annoying entertainment; for, thank Heaven, you always wish to produce indiscriminately everything that is offered to you; and yours is an affability that rejects nothing; thus it is to you alone we see that the Muses, when in want, have recourse; you are the great patroness of unrecognized merit; and everything in the shape of indigent virtue in the world steps down at your place.

CLE. If you have no wish to see them, Madam, you have only to leave them where they are.

ERI. No, no; let us see them: let them come.

CLE. But their dance may be bad, perhaps, Madam.

ERI. Bad or not, we must see it. It would be only postponing the thing with you; and it is better to have done with it.

CLE. It will be only an ordinary dance now; Madam, another time . . .

ERI. No preamble; Cléonice, let them dance.

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### SECOND INTERLUDE.

*The confidante of the young Princess calls forth three dancers, under the name of pantomimists, that is, who express all sorts of things by their movements. The Princess sees them dance, and receives them into her service.*

*Entry of the Ballet*  
of the three Pantomimists.

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¹ A proof that the art and the word were new in France; *pantomime*, meaning 'pantomime,' was introduced much later.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.—ERIPHILA, CLÉONICE.

ERI. Very admirable, indeed. I do not think that people could dance better, and I am very glad to have them belonging to me.

CLE. And I, Madam, am very glad that you have seen that I have not such bad taste as you thought.

ERI. Do not boast too much; you will not be long in giving me an opportunity of vindicating my opinion. Leave me now.

## SCENE II.—ERIPHILA, CLÉONICE, CLITIDAS.

CLE. (*Coming to meet Clitidas*). I warn you, Clitidas, that the princess wishes to be alone.

CLIT. Let me manage it, I know my court etiquette well enough.

## SCENE III. ERIPHILA, CLITIDAS.

CLIT. (*Singing*). La, la, la, la. *Pretending to be surprised at seeing Eriphila.*) Ah!

ERI. (*To Clitidas, who makes a show of going*). Clitidas!

CLIT. I did not see you there madam.

ERI. Come here. Where do you come from?

CLIT. I have just left the princess, your mother, who is going towards the temple of Apollo, accompanied by a great many people.

ERI. Do you not find that these spots are the most charming in the world?

CLIT. Assuredly. The princes, your lovers, were there.

ERI. The stream Peneus has some agreeable windings here.

CLIT. Very agreeable. Sostrates was also there.

ERI. How is it that he did not come to the excursion?

CLIT. He has something on his mind which prevents him from taking pleasure in all these beautiful entertainments. He wishes to speak to me about it; but you have so expressly forbidden me to charge myself with any affair for you, that I did not wish to listen to him, and I told him at once that I had no time to hear him.

ERI. You were wrong to tell him so, and you ought to have listened to him.

CLIT. I told him at first that I had no time to listen, but I gave him a hearing afterwards.

ERI. You have done well.

CLIT. Truth to tell, he is a man who pleases, a man such as I should like men to be, not assuming boisterous manners and provoking tone of voice; prudent and careful in all things, never speaking but to the point, not too prompt in deciding, not at all annoying by exaggeration; and, whatever beautiful verses our poets may recite to him, I have never heard him say, There! that is more beautiful than anything Homer ever wrote. In short, he is a man for whom I feel some inclination; and, were I a princess, he would not be unhappy.

ERI. He is a man of great merit, no doubt. But of what did he speak to you?

CLIT. He asked me whether you showed much pleasure at the magnificent entertainment which they have given you, spoke of you with greatest possible transports, lauded you to the skies, and gave you all the praises that one could give to the most accomplished princess on earth, intermixing them with sundry sighs that told more than he intended. In short, by dint of turning him on all sides, and of urging him to tell the cause of that profound melancholy which is noticed by the whole court, he has been obliged to acknowledge to me that he is in love.

ERI. What, in love! what boldness is his! He is a hare-brained fellow whom I will never see again in my life.

CLIT. Of what do you complain, Madam?

ERI. To have the audacity to love me? and what is more, to have the audacity to say so!

CLIT. It is not you with whom he is in love, Madam.

ERI. It is not I?

CLIT. No, Madam; he respects you too much for that, and is too sensible to think of it.

ERI. And with whom then, Clitidas?

CLIT. With one of your ladies-in-waiting, young Arsinoé.\*

\* In the first Scene of the fourth Act of the *Princess of Elis* (see Vol. II., p. 58), there is a similar ruse employed by the princess.

ERI. Has she so many charms that he could find no one worthier of his love than she?

CLIT. He loves her madly, and beseeches you to honour his flame with your protection.

ERI. I?

CLIT. No, no, Madam. I see that the affair does not please you. Your anger has obliged me to use this subterfuge; and, to tell you the truth, it is you whom he loves to madness.

ERI. You are an insolent fellow to come thus to surprise my feelings. Come, leave this; you would read into peoples' thoughts, penetrate into the secrets of a princess' heart! Out of my sight, and let me never set eyes upon you again, Clitidas.

CLIT. Madam?

ERI. Come here; I forgive you this affair.

CLIT. You are too kind, Madam . . .

ERI. But on condition—mind well what I say to you—that you open your lips to no one, at the peril of your life.

CLIT. That is sufficient.

ERI. Sostrates has told you then that he loved me?

CLIT. No, Madam. I must tell you the truth. I have wrung from his heart, by surprise, a secret which he wishes to hide from all the world, and with which, he says, he is resolved to die. He is in despair at the subtle theft which I have committed; and very far from charging me to discover it to you, he has besought me, with all the fervent prayers one could utter, to reveal nothing of it to you; and what I have said to you just now is treason against him.

ERI. So much the better! it is by his respect only that he can please me; and, if he were bold enough to declare his love to me, he would forever lose both my presence and my esteem.

CLIT. Have no fear, Madam, that . . .

ERI. Here he comes. Remember, at least, if you are wise, what I have forbidden you.

CLIT. That is already done, Madam. One must not be an indiscreet courtier.

SCENE IV.—ERIPHILA, SOSTRATES.

SOS. I have an excuse, Madam, for daring to disturb

your solitude ; and I have received from the princess, your mother, a commission which authorizes the liberty which I now take.

ERI. What commission, Sostrates ?

Sos. This one, Madam, to endeavour to learn from you towards which of the two princes your heart inclines.

ERI. The princess, my mother, shows a judicious spirit in the choice which she has made of you for such a task. This commission, Sostrates, has, no doubt, been very agreeable to you, and you have accepted it with great joy ?

Sos. I have accepted it, Madam, through the necessity which my duty imposes upon me to obey ; and if the princess would have been satisfied with my excuses, she would have honoured some one else with this commission.

ERI. What reason, Sostrates, obliged you to refuse it ?

Sos. The fear, Madam, of acquitting myself ill in it.

ERI. Do you think that I do not esteem you sufficiently well to open my heart to you, and to give you all the information that you could wish about these two princes ?

Sos. I desire none for myself upon the subject, Madam ; and I ask for no other than that which you may deem yourself obliged to accord to the commands which bring me here.

ERI. Till now, I have avoided explaining myself, and the princess, my mother, has been kind enough always to allow me to postpone the choice which is to bind me ; but I should be very glad to show the world that I would do something for the love of you ; and if you press me to it, I shall pronounce the verdict for which they have already been waiting so long.

Sos. It is a matter, Madam, in which you shall not be troubled by me ; and I could not make up my mind to press a princess who so well knows what she has to do.

ERI. But that is what the princess my mother expects from you.

Sos. Have I not told her also that I should but ill acquit myself of this commission ?

ERI. Come now, Sostrates, people like you have always far-seeing eyes ; and I think that there must be few things that escape yours. Have your eyes not been able to discover that which everybody is so much concerned about !



and have they not given you some small glimpse of the inclination of my heart? You see the attentions that are paid to me, the homage shown to me. Upon which of the two princes, think you, do I look with the most favourable eyes?

SOS. The doubts which one forms upon these sorts of matters are generally regulated by the interest which one takes in them.

ERI. For which of the two, Sostrates, would you incline? Which is the one, tell me, whom you would wish me to marry?

SOS. Ah! Madam, not my wishes, but your inclination shall decide the matter.

ERI. But if I consulted you upon this choice?

SOS. If you consulted me, I should be very much at a loss.

ERI. Could not you say, which of the two seems to you the most worthy of this preference?

SOS. If from my own eyes I were to judge, there would be no one worthy of this honour. All the princes of the world are not good enough to aspire to you; the gods only might pretend to do so; and you should accept from men only incense and sacrifice.

ERI. That is very kind, and you are one of my friends: but I wish you to tell me for which of the two you feel the greatest inclination, which is the one whom you would place first in the rank of your friends.\*

SCENE V.—ERIPHILA, SOSTRATES, CHOREBUS.

CHOR. Madam, here is the princess who comes hither to take you to the wood of Diana.

SOS. (*Aside*). Alas! how seasonably you come in, little boy!

SCENE VI.—ARISTONE, ERIPHILA, IPHICRATES, TIMOCLES, SOSTRATES, ANAXARCHUS, CLITIDAS.

ARIS. You have been asked for, daughter; and there are some people whom your absence frets very much.

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\* It has been well said that princesses are condemned in friendship as well as in love, to make overtures, and that the respect which surrounds them often obliges the most discreet and the most proud to make advances, which other ladies would not dare to do. See, in confirmation of this, the Introductory Notice to this play.

ERI. I think, Madam, that I have been asked for out of compliment; and that people do not fret so much as you say.

ARIS. There is such a series of entertainments here given for our sakes, that all our time is occupied; and we have not a moment to lose, if we wish to enjoy them all. Let us quickly enter the wood, and see what awaits us there. This is the most charming spot in the world; let us take our places quickly.

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### THIRD INTERLUDE.

*The stage represents a forest to which the princess has been invited. A nymph does the honours, singing; and to amuse them, a small musical comedy is played, the subject of which is as follows:—A shepherd complains to two others, his friends, of the coldness of her whom he loves; the two friends console him; at that moment the beloved shepherdess appears, and the three retire to observe her. After a plaintive love ditty, she reclines on the turf, and abandons herself to slumber. The lover makes his two friends approach to contemplate the charms of his shepherdess, and invokes all things to contribute to her rest. The shepherdess, on waking, finds her swain at her feet, complains of his persecution; but, taking his constancy into consideration, grants to him what he wishes, and consents to be beloved by him, in the presence of the two shepherd friends. Upon this two satyrs arrive, upbraid her with her change of affection, and feeling the disgrace into which they have fallen, seek their consolation in wine.*

### THE PERSONAGES OF THE PASTORAL.

*The Nymph of the Vale of Tempe, Tircis, Lycaste,  
Menander, Caliste, Two Satyrs.*

### PROLOGUE.

*The Nymph of Tempe, alone.*

Come, great princess, with all your charms,  
Come view the innocent delights

Which our wilderness presents to you;  
Do not seek here the splendour of the court festivals;  
Nothing but love is felt in these spots,  
Love is the sole burden of our songs.

SCENE I.—TIRCIS, *alone*.

You sing in your leafy retreat,  
Sweet nightingales replete with love;  
And with your tender strains  
You awake by turns  
The echoes of these groves.  
Alas! ye little birds, alas!  
Had you my griefs, you would not sing.

## SCENE II.—LYCASTE, MENANDER, TIRCIS.

LYC. Eh, what! ever languishing, sombre and cast down?

MEN. Eh, what! to tears, as always, wed?

TIRC. Ever adorning Caliste,  
And ever unhappy.

LYC. Then overcome, overcome, ye shepherd, the grief that haunts you.

TIRC. Alas! how can I, alas!

MEN. Make, make an effort for yourself.

TIRC. Alas! how can I, when the evil is too great?

LYC. The evil will find its remedy.

TIRC. I shall not be cured except through death.

LYC. & MEN. Ah! Tyrcis!

TIRC. Ah! shepherds!

LYC. & MEN. Control your feelings more.

TIRC. Nothing can come to my aid.

LYC. & MEN. It is giving way too much, too much.

TIRC. It is suffering too much, too much.

LYC. & MEN. What weakness!

TIRC. What martyrdom!

LYC. & MEN. You must take courage.

TIRC. Rather let me die.

LYC. There is no shepherdess  
So cold and so severe,  
But what the pressing ardour

Of a heart that perseveres,  
Can overcome her coldness.  
MEN. There are, in these affairs  
Of amorous mystery,  
Certain little moments  
In which the most severe change,  
And make lovers happy.  
TIRC. I behold the cruel one  
Bending her steps towards this spot.  
Let us take care not to be seen by her ;  
For, alas ! the ungrateful one  
Would not then come hither.

SCENE III.—CALISTE, *alone*.

Ah, how on our hearts  
The cruel honour's law  
Exercises merciless sway !  
For Tircis I show nought but coldness ;  
And all the while, too sensible to his poignant grief,  
I sigh in secret over his languor,  
And would like to relieve his martyrdom.  
To you alone I breathe this much,  
Ye trees, do not repeat the words,  
Since Heaven has been pleased to create  
Within us hearts which love can kindle,  
What pitiless rigour  
Forces us to arm ourselves against his sweetest darts !  
And why, without aught to be blamed,  
Can we not love  
What we find loveable ?  
Alas ! how happy are ye,  
Ye guileless beasts, to live without restraint,  
And to be able to follow without fear  
The sweet transports of your amorous hearts !  
Alas ! ye little birds, how happy are you  
To feel no restraint,  
And to be able to follow without fear  
The sweet transports of your amorous hearts !  
But slumber on my eyelids  
Sheds the agreeable coolness of its poppies ;

I yield to it with all my heart ;  
There is no severe law  
Forbidding our senses to taste its sweetness.

SCENE IV.—CALISTE (*asleep*), TIRCIS, LYCASTE,  
MENANDER.

TIRC. Towards my charming foe  
Let us without noise bend our steps,  
Yet taking care not to awaken  
Her coldness, which now slumbers.

ALL THREE. Sleep on, sleep on, fair eyes, lovely con-  
querors ;  
And taste that peace which you wrest  
from all hearts ;  
Sleep on, sleep on, fair eyes.

TIRC. Now silence keep, ye little birds ;  
Ye winds, stir nought around ;  
Ye stream, run sweetly on :  
For Caliste is slumbering.

ALL THREE. Sleep on, sleep on, fair eyes, lovely con-  
querors ;  
And taste that peace which you wrest  
from all hearts ;  
Sleep on, sleep on, fair eyes.

CALIS. (*awakening, to Tircis*).  
Ah ! what exceeding cruelty,  
To dog my steps where'er I go !

TIRC. What else would you have me follow, alas !  
But the beloved ?

CALIS. Say, shepherd, what would you with me ?

TIRC. To die, fair shepherdess,  
To die at your feet.  
And end my misery.  
Since, in vain, at your feet I sigh,  
I must die there.

CALIS. Hence, Tircis ; I fear that this day  
The pity in my heart is but the harbinger of  
love.

LYC. & MEN. (*one after another*). Be it pity, be it love.  
It well becomes to be tender ;

You too long have been unbending ;  
 Shepherdess, you must yield  
 To his constant flame.  
 Be it pity, be it love,  
 It well becomes to be tender.

CAL. (*To Tircis*). Too severe, too cruel I have been.  
 Your ardour I have treated ill,  
 While loving you all the time.  
 Avenge yourself on my heart,  
 Tircis, which I now yield to you.

TIRC. O, Heavens, shepherds ! Caliste, I am beside  
 myself

If joy can kill, then I shall lose my life.

LYC. Worthy reward of your love !

MEN. O fate to be envied.

SCENE V.—TWO SATYRS, CALISTE, TIRCIS, LYCASTE,  
 MENANDER.

1ST SATYR. (*To Caliste*). What, you fly from me ; and I  
 see you,  
 Ungrateful woman, prefer this shepherd to  
 me !

2D SATYR. Have my vows no effect upon your indiffer-  
 ence ?  
 And for this languid swain your heart is sof-  
 tened !

CAL. Fate wills it thus !  
 Take patience both of you.

1ST SATYR. To swains who are driven to despair  
 Love causes to shed tears ;  
 But this is not to our taste,  
 And the bottle has some charms  
 Which console us for everything.

2D SATYR. Our passion does not aye obtain  
 Whate'er it may desire ;  
 But we have another resource,  
 And good wine makes us laugh  
 When others mock our loves.

COL. Ye rustic divinities,  
 Ye fauns, and dryads, come out

From your peaceful retreats ;  
Join your steps to our sounds,  
And trace on the verdure  
The image of our songs.

## FIRST ENTRY OF THE BALLET.

*At the same time, six Dryads and six Fauns come out of their grottos, and execute a beautiful dance; then they open their ranks all at once, and reveal a shepherd and shepherdess who perform a small musical scene of a love-tiff.*

## THE LOVE-TIFF.

*Clémène, Philinte.*

- PHIL. When I was pleasing to your eyes,  
I with my life was satisfied,  
And saw nor king nor god,  
Whose lot inspired me with envy.
- CLIM. When to every one else  
Your affection preferred me,  
I would have left a crown  
To reign over your heart.
- PHIL. Another has cured my heart  
Of the passion which I had for you.
- CLIM. Another has revenged my flame  
Of your perjured faith.
- PHIL. Chloris, who is lauded much,  
Loves me with a faithful love ;  
If her eyes told me to die  
Gladly I would expire for her.
- CLIM. Myrtil, so worthy of envy,  
Cherishes me more than the day ;  
And I, I would lose my life  
To show him my affection.
- PHIL. What, if returning love again  
Should make me your bright charms adore,  
Should Chloris from my bosom chase,  
And re-instate you in her stead ?

CLIM. Though with the utmost tenderness,  
Myrtil might ever cherish me,  
With you, I still confess, I would  
And live, and die.<sup>10</sup>

THE TWO TOGETHER. More than ever let us love  
And live and die in bonds so  
sweet.

*All the Actors in the Pastoral.*

Ye lovers, how sweet and nice  
Are your quarrels and bickerings !  
How we see follow, one after another,  
Pleasure and tenderness !  
Quarrel continually  
To make it up again.  
Ye lovers, how sweet and nice  
Are your quarrels and bickerings ! &c.

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

*The Fauns and the Dryads recommence their dancing, which the Shepherds and Shepherdesses accompany by their music and song, while three little female Dryads and three little Fauns reproduce, at the back of the stage, everything that goes on in front.*

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses.*

Let us enjoy, let us enjoy, the innocent pleasures  
With which the fire of love charms our senses.  
Let those who like care for grandeur ;  
All these honours so greatly envied,  
Cause grief which is often too poignant.  
Let us enjoy, let us enjoy, the innocent pleasures  
With which the fire of love charms our senses.

While we love, everything pleases in life ;  
Two united hearts are contented with their lot,  
Such ardour, followed up by pleasure,

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<sup>10</sup> Molière had already attempted a paraphrase of Horace's ode *Donec gratus eram tibi*, in *The Love Tiff*, as well as in *Tartuffe* and in *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*. The above piece bears the same title as the first mentioned play.



Makes of our days eternal spring.  
Let us enjoy, let us enjoy, the innocent pleasures  
With which the fire of love charms our senses.

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## ACT III.

SCENE I.—ARISTONE, ERIPHILA, IPHICRATES, TIMOCLES,  
ANAXARCHUS, SOSTRATES, CLITIDAS.

ARIS. The same words come continually to our lips;  
one must always exclaim: That is admirable! nothing  
could be more beautiful! it surpasses aught that has ever  
been seen!

TIM. The praise is too great for such trifles, Madam.

ARIS. Trifles like these may agreeably occupy the most  
serious persons. In truth, daughter, you are very much  
obliged to these princes, and you cannot acknowledge  
sufficiently all the trouble which they take for you.

ERI. I am as grateful as possible for it, Madam.

ARIS. Still you make them languish a long while for  
what they expect from you. I have promised not to con-  
strain you; but their affection urges you to declare your-  
self, and no longer to delay the reward for their services.  
I have charged Sostrates gently to discover the sentiments  
of your heart; and I do not know if he has begun to ac-  
quit himself of this commission.

ERI. Yes, Madam; but it seems to me that I cannot too  
long postpone the choice for which I am pressed, and  
which I am unable to make without being, to some ex-  
tent, to blame. I feel equally obliged for the love, the  
zeal, and the services of these two princes; and I think  
it somewhat of a great injustice to show myself ungrateful,  
either to the one or the other, by the refusal I should have  
to make in my preference for his rival.

IPH. This is certainly, Madam, a very pretty compli-  
ment, in order to refuse us both.

ARIS. This scruple, daughter, ought not to trouble you;  
and these two princes have submitted, long ago, to the  
preference which your inclination might cause you to  
make.

ERI. Inclination, Madam, is very apt to be mistaken, and disinterested eyes are much more capable of choosing justly.

ARIS. You know that I have pledged my word to give no opinion upon this; and between these two princes, your inclination cannot go wrong, or make a choice that can be bad.

ERI. In order not to violate your promise or my scruples, please to accept, Madam, a way which I make bold to propose.

ARIS. What, daughter?

ERI. Let Sostrates decide whom I should prefer. You have selected him to find out the secret of my heart, now permit me to choose him to get me out of the plight in which I find myself.

ARIS. I value Sostrates so much, that, whether you wish to employ him to explain your sentiments, or whether you will be absolutely guided by him; I value, say I, his virtue and judgment so much, that I consent with all my heart to the proposal which you make to me.

IPH. That means, Madam, that we must pay our court to Sostrates?

Sos. No, my lord, you will have to pay me no court; and with all the respect due to the princesses, I decline the glory to which they intend to raise me.

ARIS. Whence comes that, Sostrates?

Sos. I have reasons, Madam, which do not allow me to receive the honour which you offer to me.

IPH. Do you fear, Sostrates, to make yourself an enemy?

Sos. I would little fear, my lord, the enemies whom I might make, while obeying the will of my sovereigns.

TIM. For what reason, then, do you refuse to accept the power given to you, and to acquire the friendship of that prince who shall owe all his happiness to you?

Sos. For the reason that I am unable to grant that prince what he would wish from me.

IPH. What might that reason be?

Sos. Why press me so much on the subject? I may, perhaps, my lord, have some secret interest that opposes itself to the pretensions of your love. I may, perhaps, have

a friend whose heart, without daring to avow it, burns with a respectful flame for the divine charms by which you are captivated. This friend is perhaps making me a daily confidant of his martyrdom, is daily bewailing to me the cruelty of his fate, and is looking upon the nuptials of the princess as the terrible verdict that consigns him to the grave; and if this were so, my lord, would it be just that he should receive his death-blow from my hands.

IPH. You, Sostrates, might perhaps yourself be that friend whose interests you have so much at heart.

Sos. Do not seek, I pray, you, to render me odious to the persons who are listening to you. I know myself, my lord; and unfortunate men like me well know to what their permission permits them aspire.

ARIS. Let us drop this; we shall find the means of overcoming the irresolution of my daughter.

ANA. Can there be a better way, Madam, to conclude matters to the satisfaction of everyone than the light which Heaven can throw upon this match. I have, therefore, begun, as I told you, to cast the mysterious figures which our art teaches us; and I hope to be able to show you bye-and-bye what the future has in store regarding this much-desired union. Can there be any vacillation after this? Shall the glory and prosperity which Heaven promises to the one or the other choice, not be sufficient to determine it; and can the rejected one be offended, when Heaven itself shall decide this preference?

IPH. As for me, I submit entirely to it; and I declare that this way seems to me the most reasonable.

TIM. I am of the same opinion; and Heaven could do nothing but what I would subscribe to without repugnance.<sup>11</sup>

ERI. But my lord Anaxarchus, do you really see so clearly into destiny that you are never deceived, and who, pray, will be the guarantee for this glory and prosperity, which, say you, Heaven promises us?

ARIS. Daughter, you have some trifling incredulity that does not leave you.

<sup>11</sup> We shall see, farther on, in the fourth Scene of the third Act that the astrologer had promised to be favourable to each of the two rival princes.

ANA. The proofs, Madam, which everybody has seen of the infallibility of my predictions, are sufficient guarantees for the promises which I can make. But, in short, when I shall have shown you what Heaven marks out for you, you shall regulate your conduct after your own fancy; and it will be for you to choose the lot of either the one or the other.

ERI. Will Heaven, Anaxarchus, show me the good or bad fortune<sup>13</sup> which shall attend me?

ANA. Yes, Madam; the happiness which shall be your lot, if you marry the one; and the misfortunes which shall accompany you, if you wed the other.

ERI. But as it is impossible that I should wed them both, it must then be written down in Heaven, not only what is to occur, but also what is not to occur.

CLIT. (*Aside*). Behold my astrologer non-plussed.

ANAX. I should have made a long discussion upon the principles of astrology, Madam, to make you understand this.

CLIT. Well answered. Madam, I say no harm of astrology: astrology is a good thing, and my lord Anaxarchus is a great man.

IPH. The truth of astrology is incontestable; and there is no one who can dispute against the certainty of its prognostications.

CLIT. Assuredly.

TIM. I am incredulous enough about many things; but as regards astrology, there is nothing more sure and more constant than the certainty of the horoscopes which it draws.

CLIT. They are the clearest things in the world.

IPH. A hundred foretold adventures happen every day, which convince the most stubborn.

CLIT. That is true.

<sup>13</sup> The original has *fortune*, which, in Molière's time, meant "fate, lot, luck," but not "riches," as it does generally now. Still the word is sometimes used in its proper sense, above all, with an adjective, as *bonne fortune*, *mauvaise fortune*, also *la fortune me sourit*. In English we have kept generally to the primary meaning, as "fortune favours the brave;" but with the indefinite article it often means "wealth," as "he has a fortune of ten thousand pounds."

TIM. Can we contest, on this matter, the famous incidents which are vouched for by history?

CLIT. It would not be common sense. To contest what is ordained.<sup>18</sup>

ARIS. Sostrates does not say a word. What is his opinion?

SOS. Madam, every mind is not born with the qualities required for the delicacy of these grand sciences, which we call abstruse; and there are some so material, that they cannot conceive what others understand in the easiest manner possible. There is nothing more agreeable, Madam, than all the great promises of these sublime studies. To transform everything into gold; to cause people to live for ever; to cure by words; to make ourselves beloved by whom we wish; to know all the secrets of the future; to cause to descend from Heaven, at one's will, impressions of good fortune on metals; to command demons; to create invisible armies, and invulnerable soldiers: all this is charming, no doubt; and there are people who have not the slightest trouble in comprehending the possibility of it; for them it is the easiest thing to conceive. But, as for me, I confess candidly that my coarse mind has some difficulty in understanding and in believing it; and I have always found it too good to be true. All these beautiful arguments of sympathy of magnetic force, and of occult influence, are so subtle, and delicate, that they escape my material understanding; and, without speaking about the rest, it has never been in my power to conceive how the smallest particulars of the least important man's fate could be found written in Heaven. What relation, what connection, what correspondence can there be between us and globes so immeasurably distant from our earth? and whence, in short, can this beautiful science have come to man? Which god has revealed it? or what experience can have been formed from observing this great number of stars which no one as yet has been able to see twice in the same order?

ANAX. It will not be difficult to make you conceive it.

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<sup>18</sup> The original has *moult*, printed. Molière perhaps did not like to use the word *imprimé*, so as to avoid an anachronism.

SOS. You will be more clever than all others.

CLIT. (*To Sostrates*). He will deliver you a lecture upon all this, whenever you like.

IPH. (*To Sostrates*). If you do not understand things, at least you can believe them from what we see every day.

SOS. As my understanding is too coarse to comprehend anything, my eyes are also so unfortunate that they have never seen anything.

IPH. As for myself, I have seen, and convincing things too.

TIM. And I also.

SOS. Since you have seen, you do well to believe; and your eyes must be differently made from mine.

IPH. But, in short, the princess believes in astrology, and it seems to me that one may well believe after her. Has she not her sense, and wits about her, Sostrates?

SOS. The question is somewhat startling, my lord. The understanding of the princess is no rule for mine; and her intelligence may lift her to glimpses of certain things to which my senses cannot soar.

ARIS. No, Sostrates, I will not say anything about a number of matters to which I give no more credence than you do; but, as for astrology, I have been told and have been shown things so positive, that I cannot doubt them.

SOS. There can be no answer to that, Madam.

ARIS. Let us drop this conversation, and please to leave us for a moment. Let us direct our walk towards this beautiful grotto, daughter, whither I have promised to go. Delicate attentions at every step!

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#### FOURTH INTERLUDE.

*The stage represents a grotto, where the princesses go to take a walk; and whilst they are entering it, eight statues, each bearing two torches in their hands, come down from their recesses, and execute a varied dance of different figures and several fine attitudes in which they pose at intervals.*

*Entry of the Ballet*

Of Eight Statues.

## ACT IV.

## SCENE I.—ARISTIONE, ERIPHILA.

ARIS. From whosoever it comes, nothing could be more gallant and better arranged. Daughter, I have wished to separate from the crowd to converse with you; and I wish you to hide nothing of the truth from me. Have you not in your heart some secret inclination which you will not reveal to us?

ERIPH. I, Madam?

ARIS. Speak openly, daughter. What I have done for you well deserves that you should be candid with me. To turn all my thoughts upon you, to prefer you to aught else, to close my ears, in the position which I occupy, to all the proposals which a hundred princesses, in my place, would have listened to with satisfaction; all this ought to persuade you sufficiently that I am a good mother, and that I am not likely to treat with severity the laying bare of your heart.

ERIPH. If I had so badly followed your example, as to have allowed myself to be carried away by some feelings of inclination which I had reason to hide, I should have sufficient self-control, Madam, to impose silence on such a passion, and to prevent myself from displaying aught that were unworthy of your blood.

ARIS. No, no, daughter; you may, without scruple, lay bare your feelings to me. I have not confined your inclination to the choice between the two princes; you may extend it to wherever you wish; and merit, with me, has so great an influence, that I consider it equal to everything; and if you frankly avow matters to me, you will find me subscribe without repugnance to the choice which your heart has made.

ERIPH. Madam, I cannot sufficiently extol your kindness to me: but I shall not put it to the test in the matter on which you are speaking; and all that I ask from it is not to urge me to a marriage upon which I am as yet not resolved.

ARIS. Till now I have left you mistress in everything; and the impatience of the princes, your suitors. . . . But

what is this noise which I hear? Ah! daughter, what spectacle meets our sight! Some divinity descends hither, and it is the goddess Venus who apparently wishes to speak to us.

SCENE II.—VENUS, *accompanied by four little Cupids in a Machine*; ARISTIONE, ERIPHILA.

VENUS. (*To Aristione*)—

Princess, in your cares there shines an exemplary zeal

Which by immortals ought to be rewarded;

And that you may have a son-in-law illustrious and happy,

Their hand will point you out the choice that you ought to make.

They all by my voice announce to you

The glory and the grandeur which, by this worthy choice,

Your house for ever shall enjoy.

Then there is an end to your difficulties;

Give your daughter

To him who shall save your life.

SCENE III.—ARISTIONE, ERIPHILA.

ARIS. Daughter, the gods impose silence on all our arguments. After this, we have nothing more to do than to receive what they are preparing to give us, and you have just now distinctly heard their will. Let us go into the first temple to assure them of our obedience, and to render them thanks for their favours.

SCENE IV.—ANAXARCHUS, CLÉON.

CLE. Behold the princess just going; do you not wish to speak to her?

ANA. Let us wait until her daughter is away. She has a spirit which I fear, and which is not of a stamp to be led like that of her mother. At last, as we have seen, my son, through this gap, our stratagem has succeeded. Our Venus has done wonders; and the admirable engineer who has prepared this trick has so well arranged everything, has so cleverly cut the floor of this grotto, so dex-



terously hidden his wires and all his springs, so nicely adjusted his lights, and tastefully dressed his personages, that there are few people who would not have been deceived ; and as the princess Aristione is very superstitious, there is no doubt that she fully believes in this deception. I have prepared this machine a long while, my son, and I shall soon have reached the goal of my ambition.

CLE. But for which of these two princes have you invented this contrivance ?

ANA. Both have invited my assistance, and to both I have promised the influence of my art. But the presents of prince Iphicrates and the promises which he has made me by far exceed all that the other could have done. Thus it will be he who shall receive the favourable effects of all the springs which I have set in motion ; and as his ambition will owe me everything, our fortune, my son, is as good as made. I shall take my time to keep up the error in the mind of the princess, to dispose her the better still by the connection which I shall skilfully show her between the words of Venus and the prognostications of the heavenly signs which I shall tell her that I have cast. Go you, and look to the rest of the work ; prepare our six men to hide themselves carefully in their boat behind the rock, to wait quietly until the princess Aristione comes to take her evening's walk by herself on the shore ; to pounce upon her, at the right time, as if they were pirates, so as to give prince Iphicrates an opportunity of bringing her that aid which, according to the decrees of Heaven, is to place in his hands the princess Eriphila. This prince has been warned by me ; and, on the faith of my prediction, is to hold himself in readiness in this little wood which abuts on the shore. But let us get out of this grotto ; while we are walking along, I shall inform you of all things to be observed. Here comes the princess Eriphila ; let us avoid a meeting with her.

SCENE V.—ERIPHILA, *alone*.

Alas ! what a destiny is mine ! and what have I done to the gods to merit all the care which they wish to take of me ?

## SCENE VI.—ERIPHILA, CLEONICE.

CLE. I have found him, Madam, and here he is ; and, at your first commands, he has followed me here.

ERI. Let him come hither, Cleonice ; and leave us together for a moment.

## SCENE VII.—ERIPHILA, SOSTRATES.

ERI. Sostrates, you love me.

SOS. I, Madam ?

ERI. Enough, Sostrates ; I know it, I approve of it, and allow you to tell me so. Your passion seemed to me accompanied by all the worth that could make it agreeable. Were it not for the rank in which Heaven has given me birth, I might tell you that this passion would not have been an unhappy one, and that a hundred times I should have wished for it the support of a fate which might have allowed me openly to show the secret feelings of my soul. It is not, Sostrates, because merit alone has not in my eyes all the value which it ought to have, and because I do not prefer, in my inmost heart, the virtues which you possess to all the magnificent titles with which the others are clothed. It is not even because the princess, my mother, has not left me the disposal of my feelings ; and I do not doubt, I confess to you, but that my prayers could have turned her consent the way which I would have desired. But there are stations in life, Sostrates, in which it would not be honourable to do all that one would wish. It is sad to be put above all things ; and the vexatious reports of fame often make us pay too dearly for the pleasure which we might have had in satisfying our inclinations. To this, Sostrates, I could never have made up my mind ; and I deemed it sufficient to avoid the engagements which I was entreated to make. But, in short, the gods themselves will take the burthen of providing me with a husband ; and all these long delays with which I have postponed my marriage, and which the kindness of the princess, my mother, has granted to my wishes ; these delays, I say, are no longer permitted to me, and I must resolve to submit to the decree of Heaven. Be assured, Sostrates, that it is with the utmost repugnance that I submit to this marriage ; and that, had I been mistress of

myself, I should have been yours, or no one's. This, Sostrates, is what I had to tell you ; this is what I thought was due to your worth, and is all the consolation which my tenderness can afford to your affection.

Sos. Ah ! Madam, this even is too much for an unhappy wretch ! I was not prepared to die with so much glory ; and, from this moment, I shall cease to complain of my fate. If it caused me to be born in a station less elevated than I could have desired, it has at least caused me to be born sufficiently fortunate to attract some pity from the heart of a great princess ; and this glorious pity is worth crowns and sceptres, is worth the fortune of the greatest princes of the earth. Yes, Madam, from the moment I have dared to love you (it is you, Madam, who gave me leave to use this bold word), from the moment, I say, that I have dared to love you, I first condemned the pride of my aspirations ; I have myself prepared that fate which I ought to expect. My death-blow, Madam, will have nothing to surprise me, as I was prepared for it ; but your kindness loads it with an honour for which my affection never dared to hope ; and I shall die, after this, the most contented and glorious of all mortals. If I could still wish for aught, there are two favours, Madam, which I make bold to ask of you on my knees : to be willing to endure my presence until this happy marriage which is to end my life ; and amidst this great glory and long prosperity which Heaven promises to your union, to think sometimes of the love-stricken Sostrates. May I, divine princess, flatter myself with this so precious favour.

ERI. Go, Sostrates, depart from this. You do not care for my peace in asking me to remember you.

Sos. Ah ! Madam, if your peace . . .

ERI. Away, I tell you, Sostrates, spare my weakness, and expose me to no more than I have resolved upon.

SCENE VIII.—ERIPHILA, CLEONICE.

CLE. Madam, I see you are very sad in spirit : will it please you that your dancers, who express all passions so well, shall give you a sample of their skill ?

ERI. Yes, Cleonice ; anything they like, as long as they leave me to my thoughts.

## FIFTH INTERLUDE.

*Four pantomimists, as a sample of their skill, adjust their movements and their steps to the uneasiness of the young princess Eriphila.*

*Entry of the Ballet.*

Of four pantomimists.

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ACT V.

## SCENE I.—ERIPHILA, CLITIDAS.

CLI. Which way shall I turn? whither can I go? and where am I now likely to find princess Eriphila? It is no small advantage to be the first to carry news. Ah! there she is! Madam, I have come to announce to you that Heaven has just now given you the husband it allotted to you.

ERI. Eh! leave me, Clitidas, to my gloomy melancholy.

CLI. Madam, I ask your pardon. I thought I was doing well in coming to tell you that Heaven has just now given you Sostrates for a husband; but, as it seems to annoy you, I shall pocket my news, and go back again as straight as I came.

ERI. Clitidas! Clitidas!

CLI. I leave you, Madam, to your gloomy melancholy.

ERI. Stay, I tell you; come here. What have you come to tell me?

CLI. Nothing, Madam. One is sometimes hasty to come to tell great people about certain things, for which they do not care, and I pray you to excuse me.

ERI. How cruel you are!

CLI. Another time I shall have the discretion not to come to interrupt you.

ERI. Keep me no longer in suspense. What have you come to tell me?

CLI. Just a trifle about Sostrates, Madam, which I will tell you another time, when you shall be less engaged.

ERI. Do not tire me any longer, I say, and tell me the news.

CLI. You wish to know it, Madam?

ERI. Yes ; make haste. What have you to tell me about Sostrates?

CLI. A marvellous adventure, which no one expected.

ERI. Tell me quickly what it is.

CLI. It will not trouble your gloomy melancholy, Madam?

ERI. Come, speak promptly.

CLI. I must tell you then, Madam, that the princess, your mother, was passing nearly alone through the forest, by those little paths which are so pleasant, when a hideous wild boar (those nasty wild boars always cause such disorders, and they ought to be banished from well-kept forests), when, I say, a hideous wild boar, driven at bay, I believe, by some hunters, crossed the road where we were.<sup>14</sup> In order to adorn my tale, I ought to give you an elaborate description of the boar of which I speak ; but you will dispense with it, if you please, and I shall content myself by telling you that it was a formidable animal. It was going its way, and it would have been as well not to meddle with it, to pick no quarrel with it ; but the princess wished to show her dexterity, and inflicted with her dart, which, with all respect to her, she used somewhat untimely, quite a small wound just above the ear. The boar, ill-behaved, impertinently turned round on us : we were two or three wretches there, who turned pale with fright ; each one made for his tree, and the princess, defenceless, remained exposed to the fury of the brute, when suddenly Sostrates appeared, as if he had been sent by the gods.

ERI. Well ! Clitidas ?

CLI. If my story wearies you, Madam, I shall put off the remainder till another time.

ERI. Finish quickly.

CLI. Indeed, it is quickly that I shall finish, for a little bit of cowardice has prevented me from noticing all the details of the struggle ; and all that I can tell you is, that, returning to the spot, we found the boar dead, weltering in his blood ; and the princess full of joy, proclaiming

<sup>14</sup> In *The Princess of Elis* ( see Vol. II.), a wild boar threatens also the life of the Princess, and terribly frightens Moron, who is even a greater coward than Clitidas.

Sostrates her deliverer, and the worthy and fortunate husband whom the gods destined for you. At these words, I thought that I had heard enough, and I hastened, before every one else, to come and bring you the news.

ERI. Ah! Clitidas, could you have given me any that was more agreeable?

CLI. Here they come to look for you.

SCENE II.—ARISTIONE, SOSTRATES, ERIPHILA, CLITIDAS.

ARIS. I see, daughter, that you already know everything that we can tell you. You see that the gods have explained themselves sooner than we thought: my danger has not been long in revealing their wishes to us; and it will be sufficiently clear that it is they who have interfered with this choice, since merit alone shines out in this selection. Can you have any repugnance to reward with your heart one to whom I owe my life? and would you refuse Sostrates for your husband?

ERI. Both from the hands of the gods and from yours, Madam, I could receive no gift more agreeable to me.

SOS. Heaven! is not this some dream replete with glory, with which the gods wish to flatter me? and shall not some wretched awakening replunge me into the misery of my fate?

SCENE III.—ARISTIONE, ERIPHILA, SOSTRATES, CLEONICE, CLITIDAS.

CLEON. Madam, I have come to tell you that, till now, Anaxarchus has been deceiving both princes, by holding out the hope that the selection would take place, for which they have been waiting so long; and that, at the rumour of your accident, they have both given way to their resentment against him, to that extent that, from words to words, matters have become more warm, and he has received some wounds, of which the issue is very uncertain. But here they come.

SCENE IV.—ARISTIONE, ERIPHILA, IPHICRATES, TIMOCLES, SOSTRATES, CLEONICE, CLITIDAS.

ARIS. You both act with too great a violence, princes;

and if Anaxarchus has offended you, I was the one to do you justice.

IPH. And what justice, Madam, could you have done us with him, seeing that you give so little consideration to our rank in the choice which you make?

ARIS. Did you both not submit to what the decrees of Heaven, or the inclination of my daughter, might decide in this matter?

TIM. Yes, Madam, we submitted to what they might decide between prince Iphicrates and myself, but not to find both of us repulsed.

ARIS. And if each of you could have submitted to see the other preferred, what has occurred for which you should not be prepared? and what difference can the interests of his rival make to either the one or the other?

IPH. Yes, Madam, it does make a difference. It is some consolation to see a man equal to one's self preferred; but your blindness is a frightful matter.

ARIS. Prince, I do not wish to fall out with one who has been so gracious as to pay me many compliments; and I pray you, with all possible honesty, to base your grief upon a more reasonable foundation; to remember, if you please, that Sostrates is invested with a worth which has shown itself to all Greece, and that the rank to which Heaven raises him to-day, will fill up every gulf which has existed between him and you.

IPH. Yes, yes, Madam, we shall remember it. But perhaps you will please also to remember that two outraged princes are not two enemies to be lightly overlooked.

TIM. Perhaps, Madam, the joy of having despised us will not be tasted long in peace.

ARIS. I forgive all these threats for the sake of the grief for an affection which believes itself insulted; and we shall not the less assist at the feast of the Pythian games with the utmost tranquillity. Let us go there immediately, and let us crown by this glorious spectacle this marvellous day.

## SIXTH INTERLUDE.

WHICH IS THE SOLEMNITY OF THE PYTHIAN GAMES.

*The scene represents a great hall in the form of an amphitheatre opening upon a grand arcade at the farther end, above which is a tribune, closed by a curtain, and in the distance is seen an altar prepared for sacrifice. Six men, dressed as if they were almost naked, each carrying a hatchet on his shoulder, as if they were going to sacrifice, enter by the portico, to the sound of violins and are followed by two sacrificers who play, by a priestess, also playing, and by their suite.*

*The Priestess.*

Sing in thousand spots, ye people, sing,  
The brilliant marvels of the gods whom we serve ;  
Range Heaven and earth :  
No song so precious you could sing  
Nothing so dulcet to the ear.

*A Greek Woman.*

Nothing resists this god  
So full of charm, this god so full of strength.

*Another Greek Woman.*

Nothing on earth exists  
Except by his goodness.

*Another Greek Woman.*

All the earth is sad  
When he is not seen.

*Chorus.*

Let us to his memory sing  
Such touching concerts,  
That from, his glory's height,  
He may listen to our song.

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

*Six men carrying hatchets execute among themselves a*



*dance exhibiting all the postures in which strength can be expressed; then they file off to the two sides of the stage to make room for six vaulters.*

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

*Six vaulters show, to music, their skill upon wooden horses, which are brought by slaves.*

*Third Entry of the Ballet.*

*Four leaders of slaves bring in, to music, twelve slaves, who dance and show their joy at having recovered their freedom.*

*Fourth Entry of the Ballet.*

*Four men and four women, armed in the Greek fashion, execute a kind of assault at arms.*

*The tribune opens. A herald, six trumpeters, and a kettle-drum player, joining the other instruments, proclaim, with great noise, the arrival of Apollo.*

*Chorus.*

Let us all open our eyes  
To the supreme brilliancy.  
Which flashes in these places.

What extreme grace!  
What glorious bearing!  
Where else can gods be seen  
Fashioned as he is.

*Apollo, to the sound of trumpets and violins, enters by the portico, preceded by six young men, who bear laurel wreathed round a stick, and a golden sun at the top, with the royal device in the form of a trophy. The six young men, in order to dance with Apollo, give their trophy to the six men with hatchets to take care of, and begin, with Apollo, a heroic dance, in which there joins, in various attitudes, the six men carrying the trophy, the four women with their cymbals, and the four men with their drums, while the six trumpeters, the kettle-drum player, the sacrificers, the priestess, and the chorus of music accompany all this, joining it at different intervals; which finishes the Pythian games, and the whole entertainment.*

*Fifth and Last Entry of the Ballet.*

*Apollo, and six young men of his suite, chorus of music.  
For the king representing the sun.*

I am the source of all delight ;  
And the most vaunted stars,  
Whose beauteous circle is around me,  
Are only brilliant and respected,  
By the splendour which I give them,

From the car on which I sit,  
I see the wish to behold me  
Shared by the whole of nature ;  
And the wide world has but its hope  
In the sole blessings of my light.

Very happy everywhere,  
And full of exquisite wealth,  
The lands on which I throw  
The sweet caresses of my glances.<sup>15</sup>

*For M. Le Grand, attendant of Apollo.*

Though near the sun all other brilliancy must fade,  
One does not the less desire to remain,  
And thus you see, that whatever he may do,  
One always remains as near as possible to him.

*For the Marquis De Villeroi, attendant of Apollo.*

From our incomparable master,  
You behold me inseparable ;  
The powerful zeal which binds me to his command  
Follows him through the waters and the flames.

*For the Marquis de Rassent, attendant of Apollo.*

I would not be vain, if I did not believe  
That another better than myself can follow his steps  
everywhere.

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<sup>15</sup> These verses are sufficiently fulsome. Can we wonder that Louis XIV. thought himself made of a different clay from the rest of humanity ?

LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME.  
COMÉDIE-BALLET.

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THE CITIZEN WHO APES THE NOBLEMAN  
COMEDY-BALLET IN FIVE ACTS.

*(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE, THE INTERLUDES IN VERSE.)*

OCTOBER 13TH, 1670.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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ON the 13th of October, 1670, was played at Chambord, before the court, *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*,<sup>1</sup> and this play was repeated on the 20th and 21st of the same month; then at Saint Germain-en-Laye on the 9th, 11th, and 13th of November. On the 23d of the latter month, it was played for the first time at the Palais-Royal, and was acted alternately with Corneille's *Bérénice* from the 26th of the same month. Molière's comedy was represented twenty-four times, until the theatre closed for Easter.

In M. Jourdain, Molière attacks a folly more pre-eminently Gallic than any other—the folly of strutting about in the dress of a Mamamouchi—of becoming a somebody, of wearing a nice embroidered coat, being the cynosure of an admiring set of gapers. The desire of showing off one's personal air and graces; of pretending to be more than one really is; of taking a title to which one has no right: of wearing a coloured ribband which one is not entitled to fasten to one's button-hole; of pluming one's self on imaginary intellectual or amatory conquests, was, and is still, characteristically French;—and something like an epitome of these follies may be seen in Molière's citizen. The purse-proud vulgarian, who desires to ally himself to a noble family, is to be found in all countries.

Dorante, the representative nobleman, is in this play not much better than the bumptious citizen. He is not so insolent as Don Juan, nor most probably so well born; but he is mean enough to borrow money from a man whom he despises and mocks; bad enough to let that man pay for the entertainments and presents which he offers to the object of his love; and sufficiently a scoundrel to pretend to pander to Jourdain's worst

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to give the correct meaning of the French title, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. Mr. Ozell translates it *The Gentleman Cit*, which to my mind gives the idea of a gentleman who was also a citizen. In the translation of the select Comedies, published in 1732, and afterwards brought out in ten volumes, this play is called *The Cit turned Gentleman*, which is not correct, for Monsieur Jourdain never became a gentleman. Besides, in Molière's time the word *gentilhomme* indicated a certain noble descent or rank, and was also bestowed upon the holders of some offices; in the same sense as we even say now in English, "The Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms." M. Jourdain was not a noble by manners or birth, but does his best to imitate one. I first intended to call the play *The Citizen who would become a Nobleman*; but Jourdain does not desire to be ennobled, but only strives to imitate the man of quality's elegant manners, splendid apparel, loose way of living, and learning.

vices. Such a character was not improbable; and many of the courtly gallants who listened to the remarks of Dorante might have thought himself portrayed, and felt perhaps flattered by the delineation. The *Mémoires* of the Count de Grammont prove at least that cheating at play, and defrauding even with violence, were not unknown to the courtiers of Louis XIV.

Dorimène and Mrs. Jourdain offer also a pretty contrast. The first is a titled widow of some experience who has seen the world, but who pretends to be innocence itself, and who does not at all suspect that the presents which her swindling lover give, come from the old idiot who is in love with her. The second is an honest but rather common-place woman, endowed with a good deal of shrewd common-sense, nearly always right in her remarks; although wrong in the way of expressing herself. Mrs. Jourdain has been compared to Teresa, the wife of Sancho Panza, the worthy squire of Don Quixote, and it is certain that they who will read the fifth chapter of the second part of that celebrated Spanish novel, may discover a great analogy between the domestic consultation of Sancho and his wife about the marriage of their daughter Mary, whom Sancho refuses to give to Lope, "old Joan Tocho's son, a hale jolly young fellow," and whom he wishes to marry a nobleman.

It has been said that Molière intended to sketch, in M. Jourdain, a certain hat manufacturer, Gandouin, who had spent fifty thousand crowns with a woman whom Molière knew, afterwards tried to commit a murder, and was locked up in a lunatic asylum, whence he escaped. But all this is mere guess-work; for Molière simply formed one fool from the many who surrounded him, and put him upon the stage, as a lesson for others.

It has also been mentioned that Molière invented the reception of Jourdain as Mamamouchi, in order to avenge Louis XIV. for an imaginary slight which the Turkish ambassador is supposed to have done to the King, by saying that the Sultan had more precious stones on the trappings of his horse than there were on the royal dress; and that the only remark which that ambassador made when he saw the Citizen's investiture, was, "that the bastinado was always applied to the soles of the feet, and not to the back." This again appears to be a mere piece of groundless gossip; for the Turkish ambassador extraordinary, Muta Ferrace, had left on the 29th of May 1670, and *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman* was not represented until the 13th of October of the same year. Moreover, according to the *Mémoires* of the Chevalier d'Arvieux, who had lived twelve years in the Levant, and spoke Turkish and Arabic perfectly well, it was the King himself who had ordered him to arrange with Molière and Lulli about the dresses, manners, and customs of the Turks for the play of *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*. To him we owe also the few Turkish and Arabic words which are found there.

The gullibility of M. Jourdain in being made a Mamamouchi may appear incredible; but sixteen years after the first representation of this play, a certain Abbé de Saint Martin was persuaded that the Emperor of Siam had sent an embassy to France, to create him a mandarin and Marquess of Miskou; and he received his new dignity with ceremonies still more extraordinary than those employed for our Citizen. And besides, does not every day produce sufficient evidence that credulity knows no bounds, and that in the financial, social, political, and even literary world nothing is easier to discover than "blind belief?" There are many people wandering about only too anxious to be literally and figuratively basted and roasted.

Lulli composed the music for this comedy, and played the part of the Muffi; but this gave great offence to the secretaries of the king, of whom Lulli wished to be one, and they incited M. de Louvois to speak to the Italian musician. The minister did so, and said that he was astonished that "a mere musician, whose only service was to make the king laugh, could aspire to become one of that monarch's secretaries." "You would do the same, if you could," replied Lulli. However Louis XIV. had only to say one word, and the musician was elected. Nay, more, he gave his colleagues a splendid repast, and afterwards invited them to come at the representation of *The Triumph of Love*, then playing at the Opera. M. de Louvois, meeting Lulli some time afterwards in the Gallery of Versailles, said to him, with a grim smile, "Good morning, colleague."

Tradition says that Louis XIV., during the first representation of Molière's comedy, did not utter a single word, nor give any sign that he was satisfied. The courtiers thereupon fell foul of the dramatist, said that his vein was exhausted, that his *hala bala bala chow* proved his poverty of invention, and showed at the same time that he mistook them for fools. During the seven days which passed between the first and second representations Molière kept his room at Chaubord, and sent Baron to find out what was thought of his piece; but the latter brought back always bad tidings. After the second representation, the King said to Molière: "I have not spoken to you about your play since it was first performed, because I was afraid of being prejudiced by the way in which it was acted; but, really, Molière, you have as yet not written anything which has amused me more, and your piece is excellent!" Immediately the courtiers began to stammer forth a chorus of praises, declared that Molière was inimitable, and that he had more comic power than all the ancients taken together!

In the second volume of the translations of "the select Comedies of M. de Molière," this play, under the title of *The Cit turn'd Gentleman*, is dedicated to His Royal Highness, the Duke, in the following words:—

SIR,—The following Attempt to make the *BURGEOIS of Moliere speak English*, implores Your ROYAL HIGHNESS'S Acceptance and Patronage. Your Name is Ornamental, and will be auspicious to the Work; For who sees, or hears, or but reads of the DUKE OF CUMBERLAND without Pleasure?

That Fair Form, SIR, which so much captivates the Eye, that Sweetness and Condescension, which so strongly engage the Heart, tho' most conspicuous, are look'd upon as Graces of an inferior Rank, in Your ROYAL HIGHNESS, by those who have the Honour to be near Your Person.

They see you copy, Sir, the Princely Virtues of the ROYAL PAIR, who gave you Birth; and prove You more lovely in Your Mind than in Your Person. They have almost ceas'd to wonder at that quick Apprehension, that nice Discernment, that delicate Taste, which have so often surpriz'd and prevented Your *Preceptors*.

You no less charm the Public, SIR, whether You appear in the Courtly Circle, or at the Head of Your little Military Company, marshalling and training that Band of blooming Heroes, whose Names, under Yours, may adorn future Histories: Or, whether You show Your Skill and Address in the *Menage*, by provoking, curbing, and mastering the generous Steed.

Think, YOUNG PRINCE, what a Figure our Imaginations represent You as making hereafter, in our Fleets, our Armies, or our Councils; and aspire to the arduous Task of rising above our Expectations.

In the meantime, SIR, when relax'd from Your Princely Studies, and Exercises, *Moliere* waits upon You to divert You with his CRY: An Author justly grown to the Authority of a classic; than whom none understood or copy'd Nature better; as pure in his Moral as he is terse in his Wit: whose Writings therefore can be no improper Entertainment for a Young Prince of Virtue and Genius. The Folly and Affectation of a *Cit turn'd Gentleman*, is what Your ROYAL HIGHNESS cannot

fail of observing about a Court; and as the Original has given you Diversion, so 'tis hop'd, will a Copy drawn at full length by *Moliere*.

The Translator of this Piece, SIR, presumes to affirm that the Text of *Moliere* presents it self to Your ROYAL HIGHNESS more correct and beaultiful than it ever yet appear'd. But he is too conscious of the fine Taste Your HIGHNESS has already in both Languages, and his own Imperfections, to aspire to any thing more than Your Amusement, by giving You an Opportunity of judging how hard it is to transplant the Beauties of *Moliere*, or to hit the Delicacy of his Sentiments, in any other Language or Words than his own.

The Persons, SIR, for whose Use this Work is chiefly calculated, are such who neither want the Taste, nor the good Sense to be charmed with *Moliere*, yet are not Masters enough of his Language to read him without Assistance, to whom, that He may have the strongest Recommendation, Your ROYAL HIGHNESS's name is presum'd to be plac'd at the Head of this Piece, hoping that Goodness, which is so natural to You, will pardon this Presumption in,—SIR, *Your Royal Highness's most Devoted, most Obedient, Humble Servant,*

#### THE TRANSLATOR.

Ravenscroft has imitated *Moliere's* play in his *Mamamouchi*; or the *Citizen turned Gentleman*; (see Introductory notice to *M. de Pourceaugnac*;) and also in his *Scaramouche, a Philosopher, Harlequin a School Boy, Bravo, Merchant and Magician*. (See Introductory Notice to *The Forced Marriage*, Vol. I.) In Ravenscroft's first play, which 'is dedicated to Prince Rupert, and is a medley of *M. de Pourceaugnac* and the *Citizen who apes the Nobleman*, it is Lucia the daughter who takes the part of the Master of Philosophy. In his second play he makes use of whatever he did not employ of *Moliere's* comedy in his *Mamamouchi*.

Farquhar, in his *Love and a Bottle*, acted at Drury-Lane Theatre in 1699, has partly imitated M. Jourdain in "Mockmode, a young Squire, come newly from the University, and setting up for a Beau;" and the scenes between the Squire, Rigadoon, the dancing-master, and Nimblewrist, a fencing-master, appear to be freely followed from *Moliere's* comedy.

Foote's *The Commissary*, acted at the Haymarket in 1765, is also borrowed partly from *Moliere*. Zachary Fungus had acquired a large fortune as a Commissary in Germany, and though a man of low birth, wishes to be made a complete gentleman. For this purpose he places himself under several masters, Mr. Gruel and Dr. Catgut,—by whom it is said Dr. Arne was meant,—and these scenes are certainly more or less borrowed from *Moliere*. The Commissary's brother Isaac is also partly an imitation of Madam Jourdain. The fencing scene (Act ii., Scene 1) between the Commissary and Mrs. Mechlin, is nearly identical with the scene between M. Jourdain and Nicole (Act iii., Scene 3) in *Moliere's* play.

There exists also an alteration of *Moliere's* play, called, *He would be a Lord*, a comedy in three acts, in prose, published in 1874, adapted for male characters, and which is a curiosity in its way. It appears to have been arranged for Roman Catholic boys' schools. Instead of Madam Jourdain we have "George, brother to M. Jourdain;" Nicole becomes "Nicholas," and Cléonte, Captain Dubar. The pupil of the music-master sings in the first act a song to the air of "Tara's Halls," of which the last four lines are:—

"My eye runs wet when mem'ry brings  
Thy image to my soul,  
And bounds my heart, whene'er I see,  
The picture of thy pole."



M. Jourdain sings to the festive tune of "We'll not go home until morning," the song "Malbrough has gone to war," etc. The scene in which M. Jourdain is made a Mamamouchi is omitted, as well as several others. When the marriage-contract has been signed, in which, of course, the chief character, Lucile, being a young lady, is absent, M. Jourdain discovers that his daughter has not married the son of the Grand Turk, but Gustavus Dubar. He endeavours to refuse his consent, is threatened by the notary with "ten years' imprisonment in Cayenne and perpetual degradation," is taken prisoner by "an officer" on a charge of procuring and wearing a dress worn only and exclusively by the peers of France, is accused of "high treason, and that means death," imagines that he is shot dead, and falls down; and finally accepts Captain Dubar as his son-in-law.



# DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

## IN THE COMEDY

MR. JOURDAIN, citizen. <sup>1</sup>	A FENCING-MASTER
CLEONTE, in love with Lucille.	A PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY.
DORANTE, a count, Dorimene's lover.	A MASTER TAILOR.
COVIELLE, Cleonte's valet.	HIS ASSISTANT.
A TEACHER OF MUSIC.	TWO LACQUEYS.
A PUPIL OF THE TEACHER OF MUSIC.	MRS. JOURDAIN.
A DANCING-MASTER.	LUCILLE, Jourdain's daughter.
	DORIMENE, a marchioness.
	NICOLE, Jourdain's maid servant.

## IN THE BALLET.

<i>First Act.</i>	HANGERS-ON ( <i>Dancing</i> ).
A FEMALE MUSICIAN.	TROOP OF SPECTATORS ( <i>Singing</i> ).
TWO MUSICIANS.	FIRST AND SECOND MAN.
DANCERS.	FIRST AND SECOND WOMAN.
<i>Second Act.</i>	FIRST AND SECOND GASCON.
DANCING TAILOR'S ASSISTANTS.	A SWISS.
<i>Third Act.</i>	AN OLD CHATTERING CITIZEN.
DANCING COOKS.	AN OLD CHATTERING FEMALE CITIZEN.
<i>Fourth Act (Turkish Interlude).</i>	SINGING AND DANCING SPANIARDS.
THE MUFTI.	AN ITALIAN MAN AND WOMAN.
TURKS, the Mufti's Assistants ( <i>singing</i> ).	TWO SPRITES.
SINGING DERVISHES.	TWO JESTERS.
DANCING TURKS.	HARLEQUIN.
<i>Fifth Act (Ballet of Nations.)</i>	TWO POITEVINS ( <i>Singing and Dancing</i> ).
A DISTRIBUTOR OF BOOKS ( <i>Dancing</i> ).	MEN AND WOMEN ( <i>Poitevins Singing and Dancing</i> ).

Scene.—PARIS, IN M. JOURDAIN'S HOUSE.

<sup>1</sup> Molière played this part himself. In the inventory taken after his death, we find: "A striped dressing gown, lined with deep yellow and green taffeta, breeches of red plush, a morning jacket of blue plush, a night-cap and a skull-cap, hose and a scarf of linen, painted like chintz, a Turkish waistcoat and turban, a sword, hose of flowered silk also ornamented with green and deep yellow ribbands and two Sedan laces. The doublet of green taffeta, ornamented with imitation silver lace. The belt, green silk stockings and gloves with a hat with dark yellow and green feathers." M. Soulié justly remarks that M. Jourdain "showed his music-master his tight red velvet breeches and his green velvet jacket, and that therefore the valuer must have made a mistake in the inventory."



## THE CITIZEN WHO APES THE NOBLEMAN.

(*LE BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME.*)

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### ACT I.

*(The overture is played by a great many instruments; and in the middle of the stage, the pupil of the music-master is busy composing a serenade, ordered by M. Jourdain.)*

SCENE I.—A MUSIC-MASTER, A DANCING-MASTER, THREE MUSICIANS, TWO VIOLIN PLAYERS, FOUR DANCERS.

MUS.-MAS. (*To the Musicians*). Come, retire into that room, and rest yourselves until he comes.

DAN.-MAS. (*To the Dancers*). And you also, on that side.

MUS.-MAS. (*To his Pupil*). Is it done?

PUP. Yes

MUS.-MAS. Let me look. . . . That is right.

DAN.-MAS. It is something new?

MUS.-MAS. Yes, it is an air for a serenade, which I  
✓ made him compose here, while waiting till our gentleman is awake.

DAN.-MAS. May one have a look at it?

MUS.-MAS. You shall hear it by-and-by with the dialogue, when he comes; he will not be long.

DAN.-MAS. Our occupations, yours and mine, are no small matter just at present.

MUS.-MAS. True: we have both of us found here the very man whom we want. It is a nice little income for us this Mr. Jourdain, with his notions of nobility and gallantry, which he has taken into his head; and your dancing and my music might wish that everyone were like him.

DAN.-MAS. Not quite; and I should like him to be more of a judge than he is, of the things we provide for him.

MUS.-MAS. It is true that he knows little about them, but he pays well; and that is what our arts require just now above aught else.

DAN.-MAS. As for myself, I confess, I hunger somewhat after glory. I am fond of applause, and I think that, in all the fine arts, it is an annoying torture to have to exhibit before fools, to have one's compositions subjected to the barbarism of a stupid man. Do not argue; there is a delight in having to work for people who are capable of appreciating the delicacy of an art, who know how to give a sweet reception to the beauties of a work, and who, by approbations which tickle one's fancy, reward one for his labour. Yes, the most pleasant recompense one can receive for the things which one does, is to find them understood, and made much of by applause which does one honour. There is nothing in my opinion, that pays us better for all our troubles; and enlightened praises are exquisitely sweet.\*

MUS.-MAS. I quite agree with you, and I enjoy them as much as you do. Assuredly, there is nothing that tickles our fancy more than the applause you speak of; but such incense does not give us our livelihood. Praise pure and simple does not provide for a rainy day: there must be something solid mixed withal; and the best way to praise is to put one's hand in one's pocket. M. Jourdain is a man, it is true, whose knowledge is very small, who discourses at random upon all things, and never

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\* The dancing-master speaks in the language of the *Précieuses*. Dancing-masters were held in high estimation at the court of Louis XIV.; hence it was not so strange, as it would appear at the present time, to have a dancing-master prefer praise to money.

applauds but at the wrong time ; but his money makes up for his bad judgment ; he has discernment in his purse ; his praises are minted, and this ignorant citizen is of more value to us, as you see, than the great lord who introduced us here.

DAN.-MAS. There is some truth in what you say ; but I think you make a little too much of money ; and the interest in it is something so grovelling, that no gentleman ought ever to show any attachment to it.

MUS.-MAS. You are glad enough, however, to receive the money which our gentleman gives you.

DAN.-MAS. Assuredly ; but I do not make it my whole happiness ; and I could wish that with all his wealth he had also some good taste.

MUS.-MAS. I could wish the same ; and that is what we are aiming at both of us. But, in any case, he gives us the means of becoming known in the world ; and he shall pay for others, and others shall applaud for him.

DAN.-MAS. Here he comes.

SCENE II.—M. JOURDAIN (*in dressing-gown and night-cap*),  
MUSIC-MASTER, DANCING-MASTER, PUPIL OF MUSIC-  
MASTER, A FEMALE MUSICIAN, TWO MUSICIANS,  
DANCERS, TWO LACQUEYS.

M. JOUR. Well, gentlemen ! What is it ? Will you show me your little drollery ?

DAN.-MAS. How now ? What little drollery ?

M. JOUR. Eh ! the . . . What do you call it ? Your prologue or dialogue of songs and dancing.

DAN.-MAS. Ah ! ah !

MUS.-MAS. We are quite prepared.

M. JOUR. I have kept you waiting a little ; but that is because I am to be dressed to-day like your people of quality ; and my tailor has sent me some silk stockings which I thought I would never get on.

MUS.-MAS. We are here only to await your leisure.

M. JOUR. I pray you both not to go away until my dress has been brought, so that you may see it.

DAN.-MAS. Whatever may please you.

✓ M. JOUR. You shall see me equipped in style, from head to foot.

MUS.-MAS. We do not doubt it.

M. JOUR. I have had this chintz dressing-gown made for me.

DAN.-MAS. It is very handsome.

M. JOUR. My tailor told me that people of quality wear one like this in the morning.

MUS.-MAS. It becomes you marvellously.

M. JOUR. Fellows! hullo! where are my two lacqueys?

1ST LAC. What do you wish, Sir?

M. JOUR. Nothing. It is only to see whether you hear me readily. (*To the Music-Master and Dancing-Master*).

✓What do you think of my liveries?

DAN.-MAS. They are magnificent.

M. JOUR. (*Partly opening his dressing-gown, and showing his tight scarlet velvet breeches, and green velvet morning jacket*). This is a kind of undress to go about in the morning.

MUS.-MAS. It is charming.

M. JOUR. Fellow!

1ST LAC. Sir?

M. JOUR. The other fellow!

2D LAC. Sir?

M. JOUR. (*Taking his dressing-gown off*). Hold my gown. (*To the Music-Master and Dancing-Master*). Do you think I look well like this?

DAN.-MAS. Very well, indeed; it could not be better.

M. JOUR. Now let us have a look at this matter of yours.

MUS.-MAS. I should like you to hear beforehand an air which (*pointing to his pupil*) he has composed just now for the serenade which you asked of me. He is one of my pupils, who has an admirable talent for this kind of thing.

M. JOUR. Yes, but you ought not to have left this to a pupil; and you were not too good for this business yourself.

MUS.-MAS. You must not let the name of pupil impose upon you, Sir. These sort of pupils know as much as the greatest masters; and the air is as beautiful a one as could be composed. Only listen.

M. JOUR. (*To his lacqueys*). Hand me my gown, so



that I may hear better . . . Stay, I think I shall be better without it. No, give it me back again ; that will be best.

FEM. MUS. I languish night and day, past bearing is  
my pain,  
Since those fair eyes imposed their cruel  
chain,  
If thus, fair Iris, you treat those who love  
you.

Alas ! what could you do to your enemies.

M. JOUR. This song seems to me somewhat lugubrious ; it sends one to sleep, and I should like you to enliven it a little here and there.

MUS.-MAS. It is necessary that the air should be suited to the words, Sir.

M. JOUR. Somebody taught me a very pretty one a little while ago. Wait a moment . . . the . . . How is it?

DAN.-MAS. Really, I do not know.

M. JOUR. There is a sheep in it.

DAN.-MAS. A sheep?

M. JOUR. Yes. Ah ! (*He sings*)—

I fancied my Jenny,  
As gentle as fair ;  
I fancied my Jenny,  
More gentle than a sheep.  
Alas ! alas !  
She is a hundred times,  
A thousand times more cruel  
Than a tiger in the woods.

Is it not pretty?

MUS.-MAS. The prettiest thing in the world.

DAN.-MAS. And you sing it well.

M. JOUR. And that without having learnt music.

MUS.-MAS. You ought to learn it, Sir, as you do dancing. They are two arts which are closely bound together.

DAN.-MAS. And which open a man's mind to the beauty of things.

M. JOUR. Do people of quality learn music too?

MUS.-MAS. Yes, Sir.

M. JOUR. I shall learn it then. But I do not know

what time I could take for it; for besides the fencing-master who teaches me, I have engaged a professor of philosophy who is to begin this morning.

MUS.-MAS. Philosophy is something, but music, Sir, music . . .

DAN.-MAS. Music and dancing . . . Music and dancing, that is all that is necessary.

MUS.-MAS. There is nothing so useful in a State as music.

DAN.-MAS. There is nothing so necessary to men as dancing.

MUS.-MAS. Without music, a State cannot exist.

DAN.-MAS. Without dancing, a man can do nothing.

MUS.-MAS. All the disorders, all the wars that occur in the world, happen because people have not learned music.

DAN.-MAS. All the misfortunes of mankind, all the sad reverses with which history is filled, the political blunders, the miscarriage of great commanders, all this comes from want of skill in dancing.

M. JOUR. How is that?

MUS.-MAS. Does not war proceed from want of concord among men?

M. JOUR. That is true.

MUS.-MAS. And if every one were to learn music, would that not be the means of harmonizing together, and of seeing universal peace in the world?

M. JOUR. You are right.

DAN.-MAS. When a man has committed an error in his conduct, be it in family affairs, or in the government of a State, or in the command of an army, is it not always said: So-and-so has made a false step in such-and-such an affair?

M. JOUR. Yes, that is what people say.

DAN.-MAS. And can a false step proceed from aught else than from not knowing how to dance?

M. JOUR. That is true, and you are right, both of you.

DAN.-MAS. That will show you the excellence and the utility of dancing and music.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> It is said that Marcel, a well-known male dancer of the last century, pretended to know a politician by his steps in dancing; and that Vestris,

M. JOUR. I perceive it at a glance.

MUS.-MAS. Will you look at our two compositions?

M. JOUR. Yes.

MUS.-MAS. I have already told you that it is a short essay that I composed formerly upon the different passions which music can express,

M. JOUR. Very well.

MUS.-MAS. (*To the Musicians*) Come, step forward. (*To M. Jourdain*). You are to imagine that they are dressed as shepherds.

M. JOUR. Why always as shepherds? Nothing else is seen anywhere.

DAN.-MAS. When we have to make people speak in music, it is necessary that, for probability's sake, we take to the pastoral. Song has from the earliest times been affected by shepherds; and it is not at all natural that princes or citizens should sing their passions in dialogue.<sup>6</sup>

M. JOUR. Proceed, proceed. Let us see what it is.

### DIALOGUE IN MUSIC.

#### A FEMALE MUSICIAN AND TWO MALE MUSICIANS.

FEM. M. A heart, when under love's empire,  
By thousand cares is always swayed.  
It's said that people find a pleasure in languish-  
ing, in sighing;  
But whatever may be said,  
Nothing is so sweet as liberty.

1ST MUS. There's nought so sweet as the tender ardour  
Which binds two hearts in self-same flame;  
People cannot be happy without an amorous  
passion;  
Take love away from life,  
You take away its pleasures.

---

another gentleman of the same profession, and of nearly the same period, said in a serious manner, "There are only three great men in Europe: the King of Prussia, Voltaire, and myself."

<sup>6</sup> This is a hit against the grand Italian opera which Mazarin had introduced in 1645. Only one year before *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman* was represented, the *Académie royale de Musique* had been instituted.

2D MUS. Sweet it would be to bow to love's sway  
 If constancy were to be found in love;  
 But, alas! O severe cruelty!  
 We see no faithful shepherdess;  
 And this fickle sex, too unworthy to live,  
 Is the cause that we for ever abandon love.

1ST MUS. Amiable ardour!

FEM. M. Happy independence!

2D MUS. Deceitful sex!

1ST MUS. How dear you are to me!

FEM. M. How you delight my heart!

2D MUS. How I abhor you!

1ST MUS. Abandon, for love, this mortal hate!

FEM. M. We can, we can show you  
 A faithful shepherdess.

2D MUS. Alas! where could we see one now?

FEM. M. In defence of our glory,  
 I offer you my heart.

2D MUS. But can I believe, shepherdess,  
 That you will not deceive me?

FEM. M. Let us see, by experience,  
 Who of us two shall love best.

2D MUS. Whoever shall be inconstant,  
 May the gods punish him!

ALL THREE. Let our hearts be kindled  
 By so fair a flame;  
 Ah! how sweet it is to love,  
 When two hearts are faithful.

M. JOUR. Is this all?

MUS.-MAS. Yes.

M. JOUR. I think it nicely arranged, and there are  
 some little sayings in it which are rather pretty.

DAN.-MAS. Now for my share, a little essay of the  
 nicest movements and the most beautiful attitudes with  
 which a dance can be varied.

M. JOUR. Are they shepherds too?

DAN.-MAS. They will be what you please. (*To the  
 Dancers*). Come!

ENTRY OF THE BALLET.

*Four Dancers execute the various movements and all kinds  
 of steps which the Dancing-Master orders them.*

## ACT II.

SCENE I.—M. JOURDAIN, MUSIC-MASTER, DANCING-MASTER.<sup>6</sup>

M. JOUR. This is not at all bad ; and these folks trip it very well.

MUS.-MAS. When the dance shall be accompanied by the music, it will have greater effect still ; and you shall see something very gallant in the little ballet which we have put together for you.

M. JOUR. That will be for by-and-by, mind ! and the personage for whom I have had all this arranged is to do me the honour of coming to dine here.

DAN.-MAS. Everything is ready.

MUS.-MAS. Besides, Sir, this is not enough ; a person like you, who are so splendid, and who have an inclination for beautiful things, should have a concert at his house every Wednesday or Thursday.<sup>7</sup>

M. JOUR. Do people of quality have it ?

MUS.-MAS. Yes, Sir.

M. JOUR. Then I shall have it. Will it be nice ?

MUS.-MAS. Undoubtedly. You must have three voices, a treble, a counter-tenor, and a bass, which must be accompanied by a bass viol, a theorbo-lute, and a harpsichord for the thorough-basses, with two violins to play the refrains.

M. JOUR. We ought also to have a trumpet-marine.<sup>8</sup> The trumpet-marine is an instrument that pleases me, and is very harmonious.

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<sup>6</sup> The acts of this play are separated by interludes ; but as the same persons are always on the stage, nothing would be easier than to unite the five acts ; for *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman* is in reality a comedy in one act, separated by *entrées de ballet*. In the official libretto, it has only three acts, and the first "entry" does not divide the first and second act.

<sup>7</sup> These two days appear to have been specially selected for private musical parties, because then no representation took place at the Opera. But in winter, the Thursday was an opera-night, and generally devoted to the production of new pieces.

<sup>8</sup> A trumpet-marine has nothing to do with the navy ; but it is an ancient specimen of one-string instrument, played with a bow, and producing a sound resembling that of a trumpet.

MUS.-MAS. Let us arrange matters.

M. JOUR. At any rate, do not forget to send me some musicians by-and-by to sing at table.

MUS.-MAS. You shall have all that is necessary.

M. JOUR. But, above all, let the ballet be nice.

MUS.-MAS. You will be pleased with it ; and, amongst other things, with certain minuets which you shall see in it.

M. JOUR. Ah ! minuets are my dance, and I wish you to see me perform one. Come, master.

DAN.-MAS. A hat, Sir, if you please. (*M. Jourdain takes the hat from his lacquey, and puts it on the top of his night-cap. The teacher takes hold of his hands, and makes him dance to a minuet air, which he hums*). La, la, la, la, la, la ; la, la, la, la, la, la ; la, la, la, la, la, la ; la, la, la, la, la. In time, if you please. La, la, la, la, la. The right leg, la, la, la. Do not move your shoulders so much. La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la. Your two arms are disabled. La, la, la, la, la. Hold up your head. Turn the point of the foot outwards. La, la, la. Your body erect.

M. JOUR. Eh !

MUS.-MAS. It could not possibly be better.

M. JOUR. While I think of it ! just teach me how I must bow to salute a marchioness ; I shall have occasion for it by-and-by.

DAN.-MAS. A bow to salute a marchioness ?

✓ M. JOUR. Yes. A marchioness whose name is Dorimène.

DAN.-MAS. Give me your hand.

M. JOUR. No. You just show me ; I shall remember it quite well.

DAN.-MAS. If you wish to salute her with a great deal of respect, you must first of all bow, stepping backward, then come towards her, bowing three times, and at the last one down to her very knees.

M. JOUR. Just show me a little. (*After the dancing-master has made three bows*) Right.

SCENE II.—M. JOURDAIN, MUSIC-MASTER, DANCING-MASTER, A LACQUEY.

LAC. Sir, your fencing-master is here.

M. JOUR. Tell him to come in here to give me my lesson. (*To the Music and Dancing-Masters*). I wish you to see me at it.

SCENE III.—M. JOURDAIN, FENCING-MASTER, MUSIC-MASTER, DANCING-MASTER, LACQUEY, *carrying two foils*.

FEN.-MAS. (*After having taken two foils from the hand of the lacquey, and having presented one to M. Jourdain*). Come, Sir, salute. Your body straight. Lean a little on the left thigh. Your legs not so far from each other. Your feet on the same line. Your wrist opposite your hip. The point of your sword facing your shoulder. Your arm not quite so straight. The left hand on a level with your eye. The left shoulder more squared. Your head erect. A bold look. Advance. Your body steady. Thrust carte, and finish off the same. One, two. Recover. Once more, your feet firm. A leap back. When you make a pass, your sword should be disengaged, and your body kept in as much as possible. One, two, thrust tierce, and finish the same. Advance, the body firm. Advance. Disengage. One, two. Recover. Once more, one, two. A leap back. Parry, parry, Sir. (*The Fencing-Master makes two or three feints at him, in saying: parry.*)

M. JOUR. Eh!

MUS.-MAS. Admirable.

FEN.-MAS. I have already told you, the whole secret of fencing consists but in two things, to give and not to receive; and as I showed you the other day by demonstrative reason, it is impossible for you to be hit, if you know how to turn the sword of your enemy from the line of your body; which depends only on a slight motion of the wrist, either inwards or outwards.

M. JOUR. In that manner, then, a man without having any courage, is sure of killing his man, and of not being killed himself?

FEN.-MAS. Undoubtedly; did you not see it demonstrated?

M. JOUR. Yes.

FEN.-MAS. And from this you may see what importance we must be to the State; and how highly the science

of arms excels all the other useless sciences, such as dancing, music . . .

✓ DAN.-MAS. Gently, Mr. fencing-master ! please not to speak of dancing, except with respect.

✧ MUS.-MAS. Learn, pray, to treat the excellence of music somewhat better.

FEN.-MAS. You are very funny people, truly, to wish to compare your sciences to mine !

— MUS.-MAS. Just look at the importance of the man !

DAN.-MAS. A funny animal, surely, with his plastron.

FEN.-MAS. My little dancing-master, I shall make you dance properly directly. And you, little musician, I shall make you sing prettily.

DAN.-MAS. Master iron-beater, I shall teach you your trade.

M. JOUR. (*To the Dancing-Master*). Are you mad to go and seek a quarrel with him, who understands tierce and carte, and who knows how to kill a man by demonstrative reason ?

DAN.-MAS. I laugh at his demonstrative reason, and at his tierce, and his carte.

M. JOUR. (*To the Dancing-Master*). Gently, I tell you !

FEN.-MAS. (*To the Dancing-Master*). How ! you little impertinent fellow !

M. JOUR. He ! Mr. fencing-master.

DAN.-MAS. (*To the Fencing-Master*). How, you great coach-horse !

M. JOUR. Eh ! Mr. dancing-master !

FEN.-MAS. If I were to fall upon you . . .

M. JOUR. (*To the Fencing Master*). Gently !

DAN.-MAS. If I were to lay hands on you . . .

M. JOUR. (*To the Fencing-Master*). Softly !

FEN.-MAS. I shall currycomb you in such a manner

• M. JOUR. (*To the Fencing-Master*). Pray !

DAN.-MAS. I shall drub you in such style . . .

M. JOUR. (*To the Dancing-Master*). Let me beg of you . . .

MUS.-MAS. Just leave it to us to teach him how to speak.



M. JOUR. Good Heavens ! stop.

SCENE IV.—A PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, M. JOURDAIN,  
MUSIC-MASTER, DANCING-MASTER, FENCING-MASTER,  
A LACQUEY.

✓ M. JOUR. Hullo ! Mr. Philosopher, you arrived just in time with your philosophy. Pray, come and restore peace a little between these people.

PRO. What is the matter then ? what is amiss, gentlemen ?

✓ M. JOUR. They have got angry about the preference of their professions to such an extent as to insult each other, and to wish to come to blows.

PRO. How now, gentlemen ! is it right to get angry in that way ? and have you not read the learned treatise that Seneca has composed about anger ? Is there aught more vile and shameful than this passion, which changes man into a ferocious animal ? and ought reason not to be the mistress of all our actions ?

DAN.-MAS. What, Sir ! he comes to insult us both, in despising dancing which I practice, and music, which is his profession !

PRO. A wise man is above all the insults which one can give him ; and the great answer one ought to give to all outrages, is moderation and patience.

FEN.-MAS. They both had the audacity to wish to compare their professions to mine !

PRO. Should that disturb you ? Men should not dispute about vain-glory and rank among themselves ; and that which distinguishes us perfectly one from another, is wisdom and virtue.

DAN.-MAS. I maintain to him that dancing is a science to which too great an honour cannot be paid.

MUS.-MAS. And I, that music is one to which every age has paid reverence.

FEN.-MAS. And I, I maintain against them both that the science of handling arms is the most beautiful and necessary of all sciences.

PRO. And what will become of philosophy then ? I think you all three very impertinent in speaking before me with this arrogance, and in impudently applying the

name of science to things which ought not even to be honoured with the name of art, and which can only be comprised under the miserable trade of gladiator, singer, and mountebank !

FEN.-MAS. Away with you, you philosophic cur.

MUS.-MAS. Away with you, you pedantic noodle.

DAN.-MAS. Away with you, you arrant college-scout.

PRO. What ! you miserable boobies. . . . (*The Philosopher falls upon them, and the three belabour him with blows*).

M. JOUR. Mr. Philosopher !

PRO. Rogues, infamous, insolent wretches.

M. JOUR. Mr. Philosopher !

FEN.-MAS. Plague upon the beast !

M. JOUR. Gentlemen !

PRO. Impertinent wretches !

M. JOUR. Mr. Philosopher.

DAN.-MAS. Devil take the stupid ass !

M. JOUR. Gentlemen !

PRO. Wretches !

M. JOUR. Mr. Philosopher !

MUS.-MAS. To the devil with the impertinent fellow !

M. JOUR. Gentlemen !

PRO. Rogues, beggars, wretches, impostors !

M. JOUR. Mr. Philosopher ! Gentlemen ! Mr. Philosopher ! Gentlemen ! Mr. Philosopher !

(*They go out, fighting together.*)

SCENE V.—M. JOURDAIN, A LACQUEY.

M. JOUR. Oh ! fight as much as you like : I shall not interfere with you, and spoil my gown in separating you. I should be very foolish to thrust myself among them, and get some blows that might hurt me.

SCENE VI.—PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, M. JOURDAIN, A LACQUEY.

PRO. (*Putting his collar straight*). Now for our lesson.

M. JOUR. Ah, Sir, I am sorry for the blows they have given you.

PRO. It is nothing. A philosopher knows how to take these things ; and I shall compose against them a satire in

the style of Juvenal, which shall cut them up most gloriously. Let that pass. What have you a mind to learn?

✓ M. JOUR. Whatever I can; for I have every possible desire to be learned; and it drives me mad to think that my father and mother did not make me study all the sciences when I was young.

PRO. That is a reasonable feeling; *nam, sine doctrina, vita est quasi mortis imago*. You understand that, and you know Latin, no doubt?

M. JOUR. Yes; but do as if I did not know it. Explain to me what that means.

PRO. It means that, *without knowledge life is as it were an image of death*.

M. JOUR. That Latin is right.

PRO. Have you not some principles, some rudiments of the sciences?

M. JOUR. Oh yes! I know how to read and write.

PRO. Where would you have us to begin, if you please? Would you like me to teach you logic?

✓ M. JOUR. What may this logic be?

PRO. It is that which teaches the three operations of the mind.

M. JOUR. What are they, these three operations of the mind?

PRO. The first, the second, and the third. The first is to conceive well, by means of universals; the second, to judge well, by means of categories; and the third, to draw a conclusion properly by means of figures; *Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferio, Baralipon*.<sup>10</sup>

M. JOUR. These words stick in my throat too much.

✓ This logic does not seem to suit me. Let us learn something more pretty.

PRO. Will you learn moral philosophy?

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<sup>9</sup> There is some analogy between this dialogue and one from Aristophanes' *Clouds*—between Socrates and Strepsiades.

<sup>10</sup> Universals and categories are words belonging to the antiquated jargon of logic. The barbarous words from *Barbara* to *Baralipon* were a kind of *memoria technica* to remember the nineteen regular syllogisms, formerly taught in the schools. Each word is formed of three syllables, representing the three propositions of a syllogism, and the vowel of each syllable shows the nature of each proposition. See also *The Forced Marriage*, Vol. I., page 484, note 11.

M. JOUR. Moral philosophy?

PRO. Yes.

M. JOUR. What does it say, this moral philosophy?

PRO. It treats of happiness, teaches men to moderate their passions, and . . .

M. JOUR. No; let us leave that. I am choleric like the very devil; and in spite of morality, I will put myself in a passion as much as I like, when the fit takes me.

PRO. Will you learn physics?

M. JOUR. What does this physics say for itself?

PRO. Physics is that which explains the principles of things natural, and the properties of bodies; which discourses of the nature of elements, of metals, of minerals, of stones, of plants and animals, and teaches us the causes of all the meteors, the rainbow, wills-o'-the-wisp, comets, lightning, thunder, thunder-bolts, rain, snow, hail, winds, and whirlwinds.<sup>11</sup>

M. JOUR. There is too much hurly-burly in this, too much confusion.

PRO. What is it you wish me to teach you then?

M. JOUR. Teach me orthography.

PRO. With all my heart.

M. JOUR. Afterwards you shall teach me the almanac, that I may know when there is a moon, and when not.

PRO. Be it so. To pursue this thought of yours in the right way, and treat this matter as a philosopher, we must begin, according to the order of things, with an exact knowledge of the nature of letters, and the different ways of pronouncing them all. And on this head, I must tell you that letters are divided into vowels, called vowels because they express the voice; and into consonants, called consonants because they are sounded with the vowels, and

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<sup>11</sup> This passage seems to be imitated from Lucretius *On the Nature of Things*, Book V., line 1189-1193, which says: "Through the sky the night and the moon are seen to revolve; the moon, I say, the day and the night, and the august constellations of the night, and the nocturnal luminaries of the heavens, and the flying meteors, as well as the clouds, the sun, rain, snow, winds, lightnings, hail, and the vehement noises and loud threatening murmurs of the thunder." See also *Introductory Notice to The Misanthrope*, Vol. II.

only mark the various articulations of the voice. There are five vowels or voices: A, E, I, O, U.<sup>12</sup>

M. JOUR. I understand all that.

PRO. The vowel A is formed by opening the mouth very wide: A.

M. JOUR. A, A. Yes.

PRO. The vowel E is formed by drawing the lower jaw near to the upper: A, E.

M. JOUR. A, E, A, E. Indeed it is. Ah! how pretty that is.

PRO. And the vowel I, by drawing the jaws still nearer to one another, and stretching the two corners of the mouth towards the ears: A, E, I.

M. JOUR. A, E, I, I, I, I. There is truth in that. Long life to science!

PRO. The vowel O is formed by re-opening the jaws, and by drawing in the lips at the two corners, the upper and lower: O.

M. JOUR. O, O. Nothing can be more correct. A, E, I, O, I, O. That is admirable! I, O; I, O.

PRO. The opening of the mouth makes exactly a little ring, which represents an O.

M. JOUR. O, O, O. You are right. O. Ah! how nice it is to know something!

PRO. The vowel U is formed by bringing the teeth together without altogether joining them, and pouting both lips outwardly, bringing them likewise together, without absolutely joining them: U.

M. JOUR. U, U. Nothing could be more true: U.

PRO. Your two lips must pout out, as if you were making faces; so that if you wish to make them to some one, and to make fun of him, you have but to say U.

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<sup>12</sup> It is said that Molière owes the idea of the pronunciation of the vowels in French—which is different from the English—to a work of M. de Cordemoy, called *Discours physique de la Parole*, which was dedicated to Louis XIV., and published two years before Molière's play was acted. This work is a translation of a Latin treatise on the same subject, written in the fifteenth century by Galeotus, which treatise our dramatist seems also to have known. That, however, the pronunciation of the vowels may be well and scientifically treated, may be seen in Prof. Max Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, 2d Series, pp. 115-125.

M. JOUR. That is true. U, U. Ah! why did I not study earlier to know all this!

PRO. To-morrow, we shall pass in review the other letters, which are the consonants.

M. JOUR. Is there anything as curious in them as in these?

PRO. Undoubtedly. The consonant D, for instance, is pronounced by clapping the tip of the tongue above the upper teeth: DA.

M. JOUR. DA, DA. Yes! Ah! the charming things!  
✓ the charming things!

PRO. The F, in pressing the upper teeth on the lower lip: FA.

M. JOUR. FA, FA. It is the truth. Ah! father and mother, what a grudge I owe you!

PRO. And the R, by bringing the tip of the tongue to the top of the palate; so that being grazed by the air which rushes out with a certain strength, it yields to it, and always comes back to the same place, causing a kind of thrill: R, RA.

M. JOUR. R, R, RA; R, R, R, R, R, RA. That is true. Ah! What a clever man you are, and how have I lost my time! R, R, R, RA.

PRO. I shall explain all these peculiarities more fully to you.

M. JOUR. Pray do. Besides, I must impart something in great confidence to you. I am in love with a person of great quality, and I should like you to help to write something to her in a small note which I intend to drop at her feet.  
✓

PRO. Very well!

M. JOUR. It will be gallant, will it not?

PRO. Undoubtedly. Are they verses which you wish to write to her?

M. JOUR. No no; no verses.

PRO. You wish only prose?

✓ M. JOUR. I wish neither prose nor verse.

PRO. It must be one or the other.

M. JOUR. Why so?

PRO. For the reason, Sir, that, to express one's self, there is only prose or verse.

M. JOUR. There is nothing but prose or verse?

✓ PRO. No Sir. All that is not prose is verse, and all that is not verse is prose.

M. JOUR. And what is it when we speak?

PRO. Prose.

M. JOUR. What! when I say: Nicole, bring me my slippers, and give me my night-cap, is that prose?<sup>13</sup>

PRO. Yes, Sir.

M. JOUR. On my word, I have been speaking prose for more than forty years, without being aware of it; and I am most obliged to you for having informed me of it. Well, then, I should like to put in a note: *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die with love*; but I should like this put in a gallant manner, nicely turned.

PRO. You would like to put, that the fire of her eyes has reduced your heart to ashes; that day and night you suffer on account of her the tortures of . . .

M. JOUR. No, no, no, I do not wish all that. I simply wish what I tell you: *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die with love*.

PRO. The matter must be somewhat amplified.

M. JOUR. No, I tell you. I wish nothing but these words in that note; but turned fashionably, arranged as they should be. Pray tell me, just that I may see, the ways in which they could be put.

PRO. First of all, they could be put as you have said: *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die with love*. Or else: *with love they make me die, fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes*. Or else: *your beautiful eyes with love make me, fair marchioness, die*. Or else: *die, your beautiful eyes, fair marchioness, make me*. Or else: *me make your beautiful eyes die, fair marchioness, with love*.

M. JOUR. But of all these ways which is the best?

PRO. The one you said: *Fair marchioness, your beautiful eyes make me die with love*.

M. JOUR. Yet for all that, I did not study; and I did it at once. I thank you with all my heart, and beg of you to come early to-morrow.

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<sup>13</sup> This exclamation is said to have been uttered by the Count de Soissons, if we may believe a letter of Mad. de Sévigné, dated June 12th, 1681.

PRO. I shall not fail.

SCENE VII.—M. JOURDAIN, A LACQUEY.

M. JOUR. (*To his Lacquey*). What, has my suit not come yet?

LAC. No, Sir.

M. JOUR. This confounded tailor keeps me waiting long enough, and just a day when I have so much to do. I burst with rage. May the quartan fever catch this villain of a tailor! To the devil with the tailor! may the plague choke the tailor. If I had him here now, this detestable tailor, this cur of a tailor, this wretch of a tailor, I . . .

SCENE VIII.—M. JOURDAIN, A MASTER TAILOR, THE ASSISTANT, *carrying the clothes of M. Jourdain*, A LACQUEY.

M. JOUR. Ah! you are there. I was just going to get in a rage with you.<sup>14</sup>

TAIL. I could not come sooner, and I set twenty hands to work at your coat.

M. JOUR. The silk stockings you sent me are so tight that I have had all the trouble in the world to put them on, and there are already two stitches broken in them.

TAIL. They will be but too large soon enough.

M. JOUR. Yes, if I go on breaking the stitches. The shoes which you made for me hurt me also tremendously.<sup>15</sup>

TAIL. Not at all, Sir.

M. JOUR. How! not at all?

TAIL. No, they do not hurt you.

M. JOUR. I tell you they do hurt me.

TAIL. You imagine so.

M. JOUR. I imagine so because I feel it. A nice argument that is.

TAIL. There, this is the handsomest coat at the Court, and the most suitable. It is a work of art to have invented a sober coat, that was not black, and I will allow the cleverest tailors to try six times to do the like.

<sup>14</sup> The very polite way in which M. Jourdain addresses the tailor, after having stormed against him, produces a very ridiculous effect.

<sup>15</sup> At the time Molière wrote, the tailor sold everything belonging to the dress of a gentleman.



M. JOUR. What is this? You have put the flowers with the stalks upwards.

TAIL. You did not say that you wanted them downwards.

M. JOUR. Is it necessary to say so?

TAIL. Indeed it is. All people of quality wear them in this way.

✓ M. JOUR. People of quality wear their flowers with the stalks upwards?

TAIL. Yes, Sir!

✓ M. JOUR. Oh! then it is all right.

TAIL. If you wish, I will put them with the stalks downwards.

M. JOUR. No, no.

TAIL. You have but to say so.

M. JOUR. No, I tell you, you have done right. Do you think that my coat suits me?

TAIL. A pretty question! I defy a painter, with his brush, to make you anything that fits better. I have an assistant at home, who, for mounting a *rhingrave*<sup>18</sup> is the greatest genius in the world; another who in putting together a doublet is the hero of our age.

M. JOUR. The wig and the feathers, are they as they ought to be?

TAIL. Everything is right.

M. JOUR. (*Looking at the tailor's coat*). Ah, ah! Mr. Tailor, here is some of the stuff of the last suit which you made for me. I recognize it well enough.

TAIL. The stuff seemed so nice to me that I wished to treat myself to a coat of it.

M. JOUR. Yes, but you ought not to have treated yourself with my stuff.

TAIL. Do you wish to put your coat on?

M. JOUR. Yes, give it me.

TAIL. Stay, we must not do things like this. I have brought some people with me to dress you to music, and these kinds of coats are put on with ceremony. Hullo! come in, you.

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<sup>18</sup> See *The Misanthrope*, Vol. II., page 206, note 8.

SCENE IX.—M. JOURDAIN, MASTER TAILOR, ASSISTANT, ASSISTANT TAILORS, *dancing*, A LACQUEY.

TAIL. (*To his assistants*). Put this gentleman's coat on him, in the way you do to people of quality.

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

*The four dancing tailor's assistants draw close to M. Jourdain. Two of them pull off his breeches, two others his jacket, after which they put on his new suit, always to music. M. Jourdain walks round in the midst of them, to see whether his dress fits him.*

ASSIS. My lord, please to give the assistants something to drink your health with.

M. JOUR. What do you call me?

TAIL. My lord.

M. JOUR. My lord! That comes from being dressed like a person of quality! If you go on for ever in the garb of a citizen, no one will say to you, my lord. (*Giving him some money*). There, this is for my lord.

ASSIS. Your excellency, we are infinitely obliged to you.

M. JOUR. Your excellency! Oh! oh! Wait a minute, friend. Your excellency deserves something; it is not a small word that, your excellency! There, that is what your excellency gives you.

ASSIS. Your excellency, we shall drink your grace's health.

M. JOUR. Your grace! Oh! oh! oh! Wait a minute, do not go yet. Your grace! (*Softly, aside*). Upon my word, if he goes as far as Highness, he shall have the whole purse. (*Aloud*). There, that is for my grace.

ASSIS. Your excellency, we humbly thank you for your generosity.

M. JOUR. Indeed, he has done right. I was going to give him all.

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

*The four assistants rejoice, dancing over the generosity of M. Jourdain.*

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.—M. JOURDAIN, TWO LACQUEYS.

M. JOUR. Follow me, that I may go and show my suit in town, and take care, above all, to walk both close to my heels, so that the people may see that you belong to me.

LAC. Yes, Sir.

M. JOUR. Just call Nicole, that I may give her some orders. Do not stir; here she is.

## SCENE II.—M. JOURDAIN, NICOLE, TWO LACQUEYS.

M. JOUR. Nicole!

NIC. Please?

M. JOUR. Listen.

NIC. (*Laughing*). Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi.<sup>17</sup>

M. JOUR. What have you to laugh at?

NIC. (*Laughing*). Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. What does this slut mean?

NIC. Hi, hi, hi. How you are built! Hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. How is that?

NIC. Ah! ah! good Heaven! Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. What jade is this? Are you making a fool of me?

NIC. Not at all, Sir; I should be very sorry. Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. I shall tap you on the nose, if you laugh any more.

NIC. I cannot help it, Sir. Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. Will you not stop?

NIC. I really beg your pardon, Sir; but you look so ridiculous, that I cannot keep myself from laughing. Hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. Did you ever see such insolence?

NIC. You are altogether so funny. Hi, hi.

M. JOUR. I shall . . .

<sup>17</sup> The actress who played this part was Mademoiselle Beauval, who had the misfortune of nearly always laughing when on the stage, which displeased the King. Molière wrote Nicole on purpose for her; and she acted it so well, and laughed so naturally, that Louis XIV. approved of her.

NIC. I beg of you to excuse me. Hi, hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. Look here, if you laugh again in the least, I swear to you that I shall give you one of the finest boxes on the ear that ever was given.

NIC. Well, then, Sir, I have done, I shall laugh no more.

M. JOUR. You had best be careful. You must by-and-by clean . . .

NIC. Hi, hi.

M. JOUR. You must clean properly . . .

NIC. Hi, hi.

M. JOUR. You must, I say, clean the drawing-room, and . . .

NIC. Hi, hi.

M. JOUR. What again?

NIC. (*Falls down with laughing*). There, Sir, beat me rather, but let me have my laugh out; that will do me more good. Hi, hi, hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. I am bursting with rage.

NIC. Pray Sir, I beg of you, let me laugh. Hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. If I take you . . .

NIC. I shall burst if I do not laugh, Sir. Hi, hi, hi.

M. JOUR. Did one ever see such a hussy as this, who comes and laughs insolently in my face, instead of attending to my orders?

NIC. What do you wish me to do, Sir?

M. JOUR. That you take care, you slut, to get the place ready for the company which is to be here by-and-by.

NIC. (*Getting up*). Ah! upon my word, I have no more inclination to laugh; for all your company makes such a litter here, that this word is enough to put me out of temper.

M. JOUR. Would you have me shut my door against society to please you?

NIC. You ought at least to shut it against certain people.

SCENE III.—MRS. JOURDAIN, M. JOURDAIN, Two  
LACQUEYS.

MRS. JOUR. Ha! ha! this is something new again! What is the meaning of this curious get-up, husband? Are you setting the world at nought to deck yourself out in this

fashion? and do you wish to become a laughing-stock everywhere?

M. JOUR. None but he-fools and she-fools will make a laughing-stock of me, wife.

MRS. JOUR. In truth, they have not waited until now; and all the world has been laughing for a long while already at your vagaries.

M. JOUR. Who is all this world, pray?

MRS. JOUR. All this world is a world which is right, and which has more sense than you have. As for myself, I am disgusted with the life which you lead. I do not know whether this is our own house or not. One would think it is Shrove Tuesday<sup>18</sup> every day; and from early morn, for fear of being too late, one hears nothing but the noise of fiddles and singers disturbing the whole neighbourhood.

NIC. The mistress is right. I shall never see the ship-shape again with this heap of people that you bring to your house. They have feet that pick up the mud in every quarter of the town to bring it in here afterwards; and poor Françoise is almost worked off her legs, with rubbing the floors which your pretty tutors come to dirty again regularly every day.

M. JOUR. Good gracious! Miss Nicole, your tongue is sharp enough for a country-lass!

MRS. JOUR. Nicole is right; and she has more sense than you have. I should much like to know what you want with a dancing-master, at your age.

NIC. And with a great hulking fencing-master, who shakes the whole house with his stamping, and uproots all the floor-tiles in our big room.

M. JOUR. Hold your tongues, you girl and my wife.

MRS. JOUR. Do you wish to learn dancing against the time when you shall have no longer any legs?

NIC. Do you want to kill any one?

M. JOUR. Hold your tongues, I tell you: you are ignorant women, both of you; and you do not know the benefits of all this.

MRS. JOUR. You ought rather to think of seeing your daughter married, who is of an age to be provided for.

<sup>18</sup> In the original, *carême-prenant*, the days which precede Lent.

M. JOUR. I shall think of seeing my daughter married when a suitable party shall present himself for her ; but I shall also think of acquiring some polite learning.

NIC. I have also heard, Mistress, that for fear of short-coming, he has taken a philosophy-master to-day.

M. JOUR. Very good. I wish to improve my mind, and to know how to argue about things amongst gentle-folks.

MRS. JOUR. Shall you not go, one of these days, to school, to get the birch, at your age ?

M. JOUR. Why not ? Would to heaven I could have the birch at this hour before everybody, and that I could know all that they teach at school !

NIC. Yes, indeed ! that would improve your legs.

M. JOUR. No doubt it would.

MRS. JOUR. All this is highly necessary to manage your house !

M. JOUR. Assuredly. You both talk like fools, and I am ashamed at your ignorance. (*To Mrs. Jourdain.*) For instance, do you know what you are saying at this moment ?

MRS. JOUR. Yes. I know that what I say is very well said, and that you ought to think of leading a different life.

M. JOUR. I am not speaking of that. I am asking you what these words are which you are speaking just now.

MRS. JOUR. They are very sensible words, and your conduct is scarcely so.

M. JOUR. I am not speaking of that, I tell you. I ask you, what I am speaking with you, what I am saying to you at this moment, what that is ?

MRS. JOUR. Nonsense.

M. JOUR. He, no, that is not it. What we are saying both of us, the language we are speaking at this moment ?

MRS. JOUR. Well ?

M. JOUR. What is it called ?

MRS. JOUR. It is called whatever you like.

M. JOUR. It is prose, you stupid.

MRS. JOUR. Prose ?

M. JOUR. Yes, prose. Whatever is prose is not verse, and whatever is not verse is prose. Eh ? that comes from studying. (*To Nicole.*) And do you know what you are to do to say U ?

NIC. How?

M. JOUR. Yes. What do you do when you say U?

NIC. What?

M. JOUR. Say U, just to see.

NIC. Well! U.

M. JOUR. What do you do?

NIC. I say U.

M. JOUR. Yes; but when you say U what do you do?

NIC. I do what you tell me to do.

M. JOUR. Oh! what a strange thing to have to do with fools? You pout the lips outwards, and bring the upper jaw near the lower one; U, do you see? I make a mouth, U.

NIC. Yes: that is fine.

MRS. JOUR. That is admirable!

M. JOUR. It is quite another thing, if you had seen O, and DA, DA, and FA, FA.

MRS. JOUR. But what is all this gibberish?

NIC. What are we the better for all this?

M. JOUR. It drives me mad when I see ignorant women.

MRS. JOUR. Go, you should send all these people about their business, with their silly stuff.

NIC. And above all, this great lout of a fencing-master, who fills the whole of my place with dust.

M. JOUR. Lord! this fencing-master sticks strangely in your gizzard! I will let you see your impertinence directly. *(After having had the foils brought, and giving one of them to Nicole.)* Stay, reason demonstrative. The line of the body. When one thrusts in carte, one has but to do so, and when one thrusts in tierce, one has but to do so. This is the way never to be killed; and is it not very fine to be sure of one's game when one has to fight somebody? There, just thrust at me, to see.

*(Nicole thrusts several times at M. Jourdain.)*

NIC. Well, what!

M. JOUR. Gently! Hullo! ho! Softly! The devil take the hussy!

NIC. You tell me to thrust at you.

M. JOUR. Yes; but you thrust in tierce, before thrust-

ing at me in carte, and you do not wait for me to parry.

✓ MRS. JOUR. You are mad, husband, with all your fancies; and this has come to you only since you have taken it in your head to frequent the nobility.

M. JOUR. When I frequent the nobility, I show my judgment; and it is better than to frequent your citizens.

✓ MRS. JOUR. Indeed!<sup>19</sup> really there is much to gain by frequenting your nobles; and you have done a great deal of good with this beautiful count, with whom you are so smitten!

M. JOUR. Peace; take care what you say. Do you know, wife, that you do not know of whom you are speaking, when you speak of him? He is a personage of greater importance than you think, a nobleman who is held in great consideration at court, and who speaks to the King just as I speak to you. Is it not a great honour to me to see a person of such standing come so frequently to my house, who calls me his dear friend, and who treats me as if I were his equal? He has more kindness for me than one would ever imagine, and, before all the world, shows me such affection, that I am perfectly confused by it.

✓ MRS. JOUR. Yes, he shows you kindness and affection; but he borrows your money.

M. JOUR. Well, is it not an honour to lend money to a man of that condition? and can I do less for a nobleman who calls me his dear friend?

MRS. JOUR. And this nobleman, what does he do for you?

M. JOUR. Things you would be astonished at, if you knew them.

MRS. JOUR. But what?

M. JOUR. That will do! I cannot explain myself. It is enough that if I have lent him money, he will return it to me, and before long.

MRS. JOUR. Yes, you had better wait for it.

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<sup>19</sup> The original has *çamon vraiment!* Génin, in his *Lexique comparé de la langue de Molière*, remarks that *çamon* is formed from *ce a mon*, and was used as an affirmative exclamation; it was also sometimes employed with a negative, as *ce n' a mon*.



M. JOUR. Assuredly. Has he not said so?

MRS. JOUR. Yes, yes, he will be sure not to fail in it.

M. JOUR. He has given me his word as a nobleman.

MRS. JOUR. Stuff!

M. JOUR. Good gracious, you are very obstinate, wife! I tell you that he will keep his word; I am sure of it.

MRS. JOUR. And I, I am sure that he will not, and that all the caresses he loads you with are only so much cajoling.

M. JOUR. Hold your tongue. Here he comes.

MRS. JOUR. It wanted nothing but this. He comes perhaps to ask you for another loan; and the very sight of him spoils my dinner.

M. JOUR. Hold your tongue, I tell you.

SCENE IV.—DORANTE, M. JOURDAIN, MRS. JOURDAIN, NICOLE.

DOR. My dear friend, M. Jourdain, how do you do?

M. JOUR. Very well indeed, Sir, my humble service to you.

DOR. And Mrs. Jourdain, how does she do?

MRS. JOUR. Mrs. Jourdain does as well as she can.

DOR. Why, M. Jourdain, you look most handsome!

M. JOUR. Do you see?

DOR. You look exceedingly well in this dress; and we have no young people at court who are better made than you.

M. JOUR. He, he!

MRS. JOUR. (*Aside*). He scratches him where it itches.

DOR. Just turn round. It gives you quite a gallant appearance.

MRS. JOUR. (*Aside*). Yes, as foolish behind as he is in front.

DOR. Upon my word, M. Jourdain, I was rather anxious to see you. Of all men I esteem you most; and no later than this morning I was speaking of you in the King's apartments.

M. JOUR. You do me much honour, Sir. (*To Mrs. Jourdain*). In the King's apartments?

DOR. Come! put on your hat.

M. JOUR. Sir, I know the respect I owe you.

DOR. Good Heavens! put on your hat. No ceremony betwixt us, I pray.

M. JOUR. Sir . . .

DOR. Put on your hat, I tell you, M. Jourdain; you are my friend.

M. JOUR. I am your servant, Sir.

DOR. I shall not put mine on, unless you do.

M. JOUR. (*Putting his hat on*). I'll rather be uncivil than troublesome.<sup>20</sup>

✓ DOR. I am your debtor, as you know.

MRS. JOUR. (*Aside*), Yes: we know it but too well.

DOR. You have generously lent me money on several occasions; and, certainly, obliged me with the best possible grace.

M. JOUR. You are jesting, Sir.

DOR. But I know how to return what is lent to me, and to acknowledge services done to me.\*

M. JOUR. I do not doubt it, Sir.

✓ DOR. I wish to finish this little business between us; and I have come to settle our accounts.

M. JOUR. (*Softly, to Mrs. Jourdain*). Well! you see your impertinence now, wife.

DOR. I am a man who likes to pay my debts as soon as I can.

M. JOUR. (*Softly, to Mrs. Jourdain*). I told you so.

DOR. Just let us see how much I owe you.

M. JOUR. (*Softly, to Mrs. Jourdain*). There you are now, with your ridiculous suspicions.

DOR. Do you remember rightly all the money you have lent me?

M. JOUR. I think I do. I have made a little memorandum of it. Here it is. Once to yourself two hundred louis.

DOR. That is true.

M. JOUR. Another time, six score.

DOR. Yes.

M. JOUR. And another time, a hundred and forty.

DOR. You are right.

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<sup>20</sup> Compare Shakspeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Act i., Scene 1), when Master Slender, upon taking precedence of Mrs. Page, at her repeated request, says: "I'll rather be unmannerly than troublesome."

M. JOUR. These three items make four hundred and sixty louis, which come to five thousand and sixty livres.<sup>21</sup>

DOR. The account is quite correct. Five thousand and sixty livres.

M. JOUR. One thousand eight hundred and thirty-two livres to your plume-maker.

DOR. Correct.

M. JOUR. Two thousand seven hundred and eighty livres to your tailor.

DOR. Quite true.

M. JOUR. Four thousand three hundred and seventy-nine livres, twelve sols eight deniers to your merchant.

DOR. Very good. Twelve sols eight deniers; the account is quite right.

M. JOUR. And one thousand seven hundred and forty-eight livres, seven sols four deniers to your saddler.

DOR. All that is correct. How much does that make?

M. JOUR. The sum total, fifteen thousand eight hundred livres.

DOR. The sum total is exact. Fifteen thousand eight hundred francs. Add to this two hundred pistoles,<sup>22</sup> which you are going to give me: that will make exactly eighteen thousand francs, which I shall pay you at the first opportunity.

MRS. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). Well! did I not guess it?

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Mrs. Jourdain*). Peace!

DOR. Would it incommode you to give me what I say?

M. JOUR. Oh, no.

MRS. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). This man is making a milch-cow of you.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Mrs. Jourdain*). Hold your tongue.

DOR. If it incommodes you, I shall get it elsewhere.

M. JOUR. No, sir.

MRS. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). He will not be satisfied until he has ruined you.

<sup>21</sup> The *louis* was worth eleven *livres*, and the *livre* was about a franc.

<sup>22</sup> For *pistole* see Vol. I., page 26, note 7. The *louis* was worth eleven francs; but in conversation *pistole* was often used instead of *louis*.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Mrs. Jourdain*). Hold your tongue, I tell you.

DOR. You have but to tell me if this puts you to any strait.

M. JOUR. Not at all, Sir.

MRS. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). He is a regular cajoler.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Mrs. Jourdain*). Do hold your tongue.

MRS. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). He will suck you to the last penny.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Mrs. Jourdain*). Will you hold your tongue.

DOR. Many people would lend it me with pleasure; but as you are my best friend, I thought I was doing you a wrong if I asked it of any one else.

M. JOUR. It is too much honour you do me, Sir. I shall go and fetch what you want.

MRS. JOUR. (*To M. Jourdain*). What! you are going to give him that also?

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Mrs. Jourdain*). What am I to do? Would you have me refuse a man of that rank, who spoke of me this morning in the King's apartments?

MRS. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). Go, you are a regular dupe.

SCENE V.—DORANTE, MRS. JOURDAIN, NICOLE.

DOR. You seem very low-spirited. What ails you, Mrs. Jourdain?

MRS. JOUR. My head is bigger than my fist, and yet it is not swollen.

DOR. Your daughter, where is she, that I have not seen her?

MRS. JOUR. My daughter is very well where she is.

DOR. How is she going on?

MRS. JOUR. She is going on her two legs.<sup>22</sup>

DOR. Would you not like, one of these days, to come

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<sup>22</sup> This joke is borrowed from Terence's *Eunuch*.

with her and see the ballet and the comedy that is played at court.

MRS. JOUR. Yes, indeed ! we have great inclination to laugh, great inclination, indeed !

DOR. I think, Mrs. Jourdain, that you must have had many lovers in your young days, handsome and good-humoured as you must have been.

MRS. JOUR. Zounds ! Sir, has Mrs. Jourdain grown decrepit, and is she shaking her head already ?

DOR. Ah ! upon my word, Mrs. Jourdain, I ask your pardon, I was not thinking that you are still young ; and I am often wandering. I beg of you to excuse my impertinence.

SCENE VI.—M. JOURDAIN, MRS. JOURDAIN, DORANTE, NICOLE.

M. JOUR. (*To Dorante*). Here are two hundred louis cash.

DOR. I assure you, M. Jourdain, that I am entirely yours, and that I long to do you service at court.

M. JOUR. I am infinitely obliged to you.

DOR. If Mrs. Jourdain has a wish to see the royal entertainment,<sup>24</sup> I will procure her the best places in the room.

MRS. JOUR. Mrs. Jourdain kisses your hands.

DOR. (*Softly to M. Jourdain*). Our fair marchioness, as I informed you by my note, will be here by-and-by to be present at the ballet and the collation ; and I have made her consent at last to accept the present which you wished to give her.

M. JOUR. Let us go a little farther away, for reasons.

DOR. I have not seen you for eight days, and I did not send you any tidings about the diamond which you placed in my hands to make her a present in your name ; but it is because I have had all the trouble in the world to overcome her scruples ; and it is only to-day that she has made up her mind to accept it.

M. JOUR. How did she like it ?

DOR. Marvellously ; and unless I am very much mis-

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<sup>24</sup> See Introductory Notice to *The Magnificent Lovers*.

taken, the beauty of this diamond will have an admirable effect for you upon her mind.

M. JOUR. Would to Heaven !

MRS. JOUR. (*To Nicole*). When once he is with him, he cannot leave him.

DOR. I have made her estimate properly the richness of this present, and the violence of your love.

M. JOUR. This kindness, Sir, overwhelms me ; and I am in the greatest possible confusion to see a man of your standing lower himself for me to do what you do.

DOR. Are you jesting ? Does one stick at these scruples among friends ? And would you not do the same for me, if the opportunity presented itself ?

M. JOUR. Oh ! certainly, and with all my heart !

MRS. JOUR. (*To Nicole*). How his presence weighs me down !

DOR. As for me, I never mind anything when I am serving a friend ; and when you made me a confidant of the passion which you had conceived for this charming marchioness with whom I was acquainted, you saw that directly I myself made you an offer to serve your love-affair.

M. JOUR. It is true. These favours confound me.

MRS. JOUR. (*To Nicole*). Is he not going ?

NIC. They are very comfortable together.

DOR. You have taken the right road to touch her heart. Women love above all the expenses which we make for them ; and your frequent serenades, your continual banquets, this superb display of fireworks which she witnessed on the water, the diamond which she received from you, and the entertainment which you are preparing for her ; all this says more in favour of your love than all the words which you could have spoken to her yourself.

M. JOUR. No expense would be too great for me, if by that means I could find the way to her heart. A woman of quality has powerful charms for me ; and it is an honour which I would purchase at any price.

MRS. JOUR. (*Softly, to Nicole*). What can they have so much to say to each other ? Just go softly and listen.

DOR. By-and-by you shall enjoy at your ease the pleasure of seeing her ; and your eyes shall have ample time to satisfy themselves.

M. JOUR. To be at full liberty, I have arranged so that my wife shall go and dine with my sister, where she will pass the whole afternoon.

DOR. You have done wisely, and your wife might have been somewhat in the way. I have given the necessary orders for you to the cook, and for all the things that are wanted for the ballet. I have invented it myself, and provided the execution comes up to the conception, I am certain that it will be found . . .

M. JOUR. (*Perceiving that Nicole is listening, and giving her a box on the ear*). Good gracious, you are very impatient! (*To Dorante*). Let us go out if you please.

SCENE VII.—MRS. JOURDAIN, NICOLE.

NIC. Troth, Mrs. the curiosity has cost me something; but I believe there is a snake in the grass; and they were talking of some affair at which they do not wish you to be present.

MRS. JOUR. This is not the first time, Nicole, that I have conceived some suspicion about my husband. Unless I am most cruelly mistaken, there is some love affair going on; and I am doing my best to discover what it may be. But let us think of my daughter. You know the affection Cléonte has for her: he is a man whom I like; and I will aid his suit, and give him Lucile, if I can.

NIC. Really, Mrs., I am infinitely delighted to find you in this mind; for if the master suits you, the servant suits me no less; and I could wish that our wedding could be close upon theirs.

MRS. JOUR. Go and speak to him in my name, and tell him to come to see me by-and-by, so that we may make together the request for my daughter's hand to my husband.

NIC. I am hastening thither joyfully, Mrs., and I could not receive a more agreeable commission. (*Alone*). I fancy, I shall be giving much pleasure to some people.

SCENE VIII.—CLÉONTE, COVIELLE, NICOLE.

NIC. (*To Cléonte*). Ah! You are just in time! I am a messenger of joy, and I come . . .

CLE. Begone, you perfidious woman and do not come to amuse me with treacherous speeches.

NIC. Is it thus that you receive . . .

CLE. Begone, I tell you, <sup>25</sup> and now go and tell your faithless mistress, that she shall never deceive the too simple Cléonte.

NIC. What craze is this? My poor Covielle, just tell me what this means?

Cov. You poor Covielle, you little wretch! Go quickly out of my sight, hussy, and leave me in peace.

NIC. What! you come also to . . .

Cov. Get out of my sight, I say; and never in your life speak more to me.

NIC. (*Aside*). Good gracious! what gad-fly has stung them both? I had better go, and tell my mistress this pretty story. <sup>26</sup>

SCENE IX.—CLÉONTE, COVIELLE.

CLE. What! To treat a lover thus; and that a lover the most constant and the most passionate of all lovers!

Cov. It is a most horrible thing that they have done to us both.

CLE. I display all the ardour and tenderness imaginable to a lady; I love no one on earth but her, and think of nothing but her; she is all my care, all my desire, all my joy; I speak but of her, think but of her, dream but of her; I live but for her, my heart beats but for her, and this is the worthy reward of so much affection! I am two days, which to me are two horrible ages, without seeing her: I meet her by accident; at the sight of her my heart feels quite elated, joy is displayed on my countenance, rapturously I fly towards her, and the faithless one averts her looks, and passes abruptly on, as if she had never seen me in her life!

Cov. I have the same story to tell.

CLE. Has aught like the perfidy of this ungrateful Lucile ever been seen?

Cov. Or anything, Sir, like that of that jade Nicole?

CLE. After the many ardent sacrifices, sighs and vows which I have paid to her charms!

<sup>25</sup> This is the third time Molière makes use of a tiff between lovers and of reconciliation afterwards. First in *The Love-Tiff*, secondly in *Tartuffe*, and thirdly above.



COV. After such assiduous homage, attentions and services which I have rendered to her in the kitchen !

CLE. The many tears I have shed at her feet !

COV. The many buckets of water I have drawn from the well for her !

CLE. The warmth I have shown in cherishing her more than my own self !

COV. The heat I have suffered in turning the spit in her place !

CLE. She flees from me with disdain !

COV. She turns her back upon me shamelessly !

CLE. It is a perfidy deserving the greatest punishment.

COV. It is a treachery that merits a thousand slaps in the face.

CLE. Do not you, I pray, attempt ever to speak of her to me.

COV. I, Sir ? Heaven forbid !

CLE. Do not come to excuse to me the conduct of this faithless girl.

COV. You need not fear.

CLE. No, look you here, all your speeches in her defence will avail nothing.

COV. Who dreams of such a thing ?

CLE. I shall nurse my spite against her, and break off all connection.

COV. You have my consent.

CLE. This count who visits at her house excites her fancy perhaps ; and her mind—I see it well enough—allow itself to be dazzled by rank. But I am bound, for my honour's sake, to prevent the scandal of her inconstancy. I will go, as far as she goes, towards the change to which I see her hastening, and not leave to her all the glory of jilting me.

COV. That is well said ; and as far as I am concerned, I share all your sentiments.

CLE. Assist me in my resentment and support my resolution against every remainder of affection which might plead for her. Say, I entreat you, all the harm of her that you can. Give me a portrait of her which shall render her contemptible in my sight, and, to disgust me with her, point me out all the faults which you can see in her.

Cov. She, Sir? a pretty mawkin, a well-shaped, pretentious young woman,<sup>26</sup> to be so much enamoured of! I see nothing in her but what is very ordinary; and you will meet a hundred women more worthy of you. First of all, her eyes are small.

CLE. That is true, her eyes ~~are small~~; but they are full of fire, the most brilliant, the most piercing in the world, and tenderest which one can see.

Cov. She has a large mouth.

CLE. Yes; but it has charms not to be found in other mouths; and this very mouth, in looking at it, inspires desire, and is the most attractive and amorous in the world.

Cov. As for her figure, she ~~is not tall~~.

CLE. No; but is full of ease, and well shaped.

Cov. She affects a carelessness in her speech and movements.

CLE. It is true, but she is full of grace; and her manners are engaging, and have an indefinable charm which twines round one's heart.

Cov. As to her wit . . .

CLE. Ah! she has that, Covielle, of the finest and of the most delicate.

Cov. Her ~~conversation~~ . . .

CLE. Her conversation is charming.

Cov. It is always grave.

CLE. Would you have unrestrained liveliness, and ever profuse gaiety! and is there anything more annoying than these women who giggle at every sally?

Cov. But, after all, she is as whimsical as anyone could well be.

CLE. Yes, she is whimsical, I agree with you there; but everything becomes the fair sex; one allows everything to the fair sex.<sup>27</sup>

Cov. Since that is the case, I see plainly that you are inclined to love her always.

<sup>26</sup> The original has *pimpesouée*, probably from the old verb *pimper*, to adorn oneself—*pimpant* still exists in modern French—and the old adjective *souef*, Latin *suavis*, sweet, agreeable.

<sup>27</sup> It is said that Molière, in delineating Lucile, described his spouse, who played the character. That may be true; but the real passion, which is displayed in Cléonte's answers to Covielle, is, in every way, admirable.

CLE. I? I would sooner die; and I mean to hate her as much as I have loved her.

Cov. But how, if you find her so perfect?

CLE. That is where my revenge shall prove itself all the more; where I shall the better show her the strength of my heart to hate her, to leave her, beautiful, full of attractions, amiable as I may think her. Here she comes.

SCENE X.—LUCILE, NICOLE, CLÉONTE, COVIELLE.

NIC. (*To Lucile*). As for me, I was perfectly scandalized at it.

LUC. It can be nothing else, Nicole, than what I tell you. But here he is,

CLE. (*To Covielle*). I will not even speak to her.

Cov. I will do as you do.

LUC. What is it Cléonte? what is the matter with you?

NIC. What is the matter with you, Covielle?

LUC. What grief possesses you?

NIC. What ill-humour has got hold of you?

LUC. Are you dumb, Cléonte?

NIC. Have you lost your speech, Covielle?

CLE. This is villainous!

Cov. It is Judas-like!

LUC. I see clearly that the meeting just now has disturbed your mind.

CLE. (*To Covielle*). Ah! ah! people are finding out what they have been doing.

NIC. Our reception of this morning has made you alarmed.<sup>28</sup>

Cov. (*To Cléonte*). They have found out the sore.<sup>29</sup>

LUC. Is it not true, Cléonte, that this is the reason of your huff?

CLE. Yes, false girl, it is that, since I am to speak; and I must tell you that you shall not glory, as you think you

<sup>28</sup> *Prendre la chèvre*, to take the goat, in the original; hence probably the meaning of to rear, to get frightened, to get alarmed.

<sup>29</sup> The original has *on a deviné l'enclouure*: they have guessed the sore, because in shoeing a horse, it was sometimes wounded; and this wound, not always easy to find out, was called *l'enclouure*. The expression has also been used in the fifth Scene of the second Act of *The Blunderer*.

shall, in your faithlessness; that I shall be the first to break with you, and that you shall not have the advantage of driving me away. It will pain me, no doubt, to conquer the love which I have for you; it will cause me some grief; I shall suffer for some time; but I will accomplish it, and I will sooner stab myself to the heart than have the weakness to come back to you.

Cov. (*To Nicole*). As says the master, so says the man.<sup>29</sup>

LUC. There is much ado about nothing! I wish to tell you the reason, Cléonte, which made me avoid you this morning.

CLE. (*Trying to go away from Lucile*). I wish to listen to nothing.

NIC. (*To Covielle*). I wish to tell you the reason that made us pass you so quickly.

Cov. (*Also endeavoring to go, to avoid Nicole*). I wish to hear nothing.

LUC. (*Following Cléonte*). You must know, then, that this morning . . .

CLE. (*Moving away, without looking at Lucile*). No I tell you.

NIC. (*Following Covielle*). Know then . . .

Cov. (*Moving away, without looking at Nicole*). No, you wretch!

LUC. Listen.

CLE. Not a whit.

NIC. Let me speak.

CL. I am deaf.

LUC. Cléonte!

CLE. No.

NIC. Covielle!

Cov. Not a bit.

LUC. Stay.

CLE. Stuff!

NIC. Hear me.

Cov. Nonsense!

LUC. One moment,

CLE. Not one.

NIC. A little patience.

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<sup>29</sup> In the original, *queussi queussi*, a provincial expression.

COV. Fiddle-sticks!

LUC. Two words.

CLE. No! it is finished.

NIC. One word.

COV. No more dealings.

LUC. (*Stopping*). Very well then! Since you will not hear me, keep to your own opinion, and do as you please.

NIC. (*Also stopping*). Since you act thus, take it as you will.

CLE. (*Turning towards Lucile*). Let us know, then, the reason of such a pretty welcome.

✓ LUC. (*Going in her turn, to avoid Cléonte*.) It no longer pleases me to tell it.

COV. (*Turning towards Nicole*). Well, just let us learn this story.

NIC. (*Also going, to avoid Covielle*). I will no longer tell it to you.

CLE. (*Following Lucile*). Tell me . . .

LUC. (*Moving away, without looking at Cléonte*). No, I shall say nothing.

CLE. (*Following Nicole*). Relate to me . . .

NIC. (*Moving away, without looking at Covielle*). No, I shall relate nothing to you.

CLE. Pray.

LUC. No, I tell you.

COV. For mercy's sake.

NIC. Not a whit.

CLE. I pray you.

LUC. Leave me.

COV. I beseech you.

NIC. Begone from there

CLE. Lucile!

LUC. No.

COV. Nicole!

NIC. Not a bit.

CLE. In Heaven's name.

LUC. I will not.

COV. Speak to me.

NIC. Not at all.

✓ CLE. Clear up my doubts.

LUC. No: I will do nothing of the kind.

Cov. Ease my mind.

Nic. No: I do not choose.

Cle. Well! since you care so little to cure my grief, and to justify yourself for the unworthy treatment which my affection has received from you, this is the last time that you shall see me, ungrateful girl: and I shall go far away from you, to die of grief and love.

Cov. (*To Nicole*). And I, I will follow his steps.

Luc. (*To Cléonte, who is going*). Cléonte!

Nic. (*To Covielle, who is about to follow his master*). Covielle!

Cle. (*Stopping*). Eh!

Cov. (*Also stopping*). Please?

Luc. Whither are you going?

Cle. Where I have told you.

Cov. We are going to die.

Luc. You are going to die, Cléonte?

Cle. Yes, cruel one, since you will it so.

Luc. I! I wish you to die?

Cle. Yes, you wish it.

Luc. Who says so.

Cle. (*Drawing near to Lucile*). Is it not wishing it, when you will not clear up my suspicions?

Luc. Is it my fault? and if you had listened to me, would I not have told you that the adventure of which you complain was caused this morning by the presence of an old aunt, who insists that merely the approach of a man dishonours a girl, who punctually lectures us on that chapter, and paints us all men as devils whom we should flee from.

Nic. (*To Covielle*). That is the secret of the affair.

Cle. Are you not deceiving me, Lucile?

Cov. (*To Nicole*). Are you not imposing upon me?

Luc. (*To Cléonte*). Nothing is more true.

Nic. (*To Covielle*). That is the affair as it is.

Cov. (*To Cléonte*). Shall we give in to this?

Cle. Ah! Lucile, how quickly you appease things in my heart by a single word from your mouth, and how easily we are persuaded by those whom we love!

Cov. How easily one is wheedled by those confounded animals!

SCENE XI.—MRS. JOURDAIN, CLÉONTE, LUCILE,  
NICOLE, COVIELLE.

MRS. JOUR. I am glad to see you, Cléonte; and you are just in good time. My husband is coming; quickly choose the moment to ask him for Lucile's hand ✓

CLE. Ah! Madam, how sweet these words are, and how they flatter my wishes! Could I receive a more charming command, a more precious favour?

## SCENE XII.—CLÉONTE, M. JOURDAIN, MRS. JOURDAIN, LUCILE, COVIELLE, NICOLE.

CLE. Sir, I did not wish to depute any one else to prefer a request which I have long meditated. It concerns me sufficiently to undertake it in person; and without farther ado, I will tell you that the honour of being your ✓ son-in-law is a glorious favour which I beg of you to grant me.

M. JOUR. Before giving you your answer, Sir, I pray you to tell me whether you are a nobleman

CLE. Sir, most people, on this question, do not hesitate much; the word is easily spoken. There is no scruple in assuming that name, and present custom seems to authorize the theft. As for me, I confess to you, my feelings on this point are rather more delicate. I think that all imposture is unworthy of an honest man, and that it is cowardice to disguise what Heaven has made us, to deck ourselves in the eyes of the world with a stolen title, and to wish to pass for what we are not. I am born of parents who, no doubt, have filled honourable offices; I have acquitted myself with honour in the army, where I served for six years; and I am sufficiently well to do to hold a middling rank in society; but with all this, I will not assume what others, in my position, might think they had the right to pretend to; and I will tell you frankly that I am not a ✓ nobleman.

M. JOUR. Your hand, Sir; my daughter is not for you.

CLE. How.

M. JOUR. You are not a nobleman: you shall not have my daughter.

MRS. JOUR. What is it you mean by your nobleman? Is it that we ourselves are descended from Saint Louis?

M. JOUR. Hold your tongue, wife; I see what you are driving at.

Mrs. JOUR. Are we two descended from aught else than from plain citizens?

M. JOUR. If that is not a slander?

Mrs. JOUR. And was your father not a tradesman as well as mine?

M. JOUR. Plague take the woman, she always harps upon that. If your father was a tradesman, so much the worse for him; but as for mine, they are impertinent fellows who say so. All that I have to say to you, is that I will have a nobleman for a son-in-law.

Mrs. JOUR. Your daughter wants a husband who is suited to her; and it is much better for her that she should have a respectable man, rich and handsome, than a beggarly and deformed nobleman.

Nic. That is true; we have the son of our village squire, who is the greatest lout and the most stupid nincompoop that I have ever seen.

M. JOUR. (*To Nicole*). Hold your tongue, Miss Impertinence; you always thrust yourself into the conversation. I have sufficient wealth to give my daughter; I wish only for honours, and I will make her a ~~marchioness~~.

Mrs. JOUR. Marchioness?

M. JOUR. Yes, marchioness.

Mrs. JOUR. Alas! Heaven preserve me from it!

M. JOUR. It is a thing I am determined on.

Mrs. JOUR. It is a thing to which I shall never consent. Matches with people above one's own position are always subject to the most grievous inconvenience. I do not wish a son-in-law of mine to be able to reproach my daughter with her parents, or that she should have children who would be ashamed to call me their grandmother. If she were to come and visit me with the equipage of a grand lady, and that, through inadvertency, she should miss curtsying to one of the neighbourhood, people would not fail to say a hundred silly things immediately. Do you see this lady marchioness, they would say, who is giving herself such airs? She is the daughter of M. Jourdain, who was only too glad, when she was a child, to play at ladyship with us. She has not always been so high up in



the world, and her two grandfathers sold cloth near the St. Innocent gate.<sup>21</sup> They amassed great wealth for their children, for which they are probably paying very dearly in the other world; for people can scarcely become so rich by remaining honest folks. I will not have all this tittle-tattle, and in one word, I wish for a man who shall be grateful to me for my daughter, and to whom I shall be able to say: Sit down there, son-in-law, and dine with me.

M. JOUR. These are the sentiments of a narrow mind, to wish to remain for ever in a mean condition. Do not answer me any more: my daughter shall be a marchioness in spite of all the world; and, if you put me in a passion, I shall make her a duchess.<sup>22</sup>

SCENE XIII.—MRS. JOURDAIN, LUCILE, CLÉONTE, NICOLE, COVIELLE.

MRS. JOUR. Cléonte, do not lose courage as yet. (*To Lucile*). Come with me, daughter, and tell your father plainly that if you cannot have him, you will not marry any one.

SCENE XIV.—CLÉONTE, COVIELLE.

COV. You have made a nice thing of it with your high-flown sentiments!

CLE. What would you have me to do? I have scruples upon this subject which no example could conquer.

COV. Are you mad to look at it seriously with a man like that? Do not you see that he is crazy? and would it cost you aught to accommodate yourself to his fancies?

CLE. You are right; but I did not think that one had to give proof of noble birth to become the son-in-law of M. Jourdain.

COV. (*Laughing*). Ah! ah! ah!

CLE. What are you laughing at?

COV. At a thought that comes into my head of playing

<sup>21</sup> There was no gate in Paris called thus. It was probably the gate of the well-known cemetery of the Saints-Innocents.

<sup>22</sup> See in the Introductory Notice the conversation between Sancho Panza and Teresa.

a trick upon our man, and of obtaining for you what you wish.

CLE. How?

COV. The idea is altogether amusing.

CLE. What is it, then?

COV. There was a little 'masquerade' performed some time ago, which would fit in marvellously here, and which I propose to employ in the trick<sup>22</sup> that I wish to play upon our ridiculous individual. All this smacks a little of comedy; but, with him, we may risk anything; we have no need to take much trouble, and he is just the man to play his part in it to perfection, and to take for granted all the tales to which we shall treat him. I have the actors and the dresses quite ready; just let me manage it.

CLE. But tell me . . .

COV. I will let you into the whole of it. Let us withdraw; here he comes.

SCENE XV.—M. JOURDAIN, *alone*.

What the deuce is it all? They do nothing but reproach me with my great lords, and I myself can see nothing more beautiful than to keep company with great lords; there is only honour and civility with them; and I would have given two fingers of my hand, to have been born a count or a marquis.

SCENE XVI.—M. JOURDAIN, A LACQUEY.

LAC. Sir, here is the count, and a lady whom he is handing in.

M. JOUR. Eh! good Heavens! I have some orders to give. Tell them that I am coming in a minute.

SCENE XVII.—DORIMÈNE, DORANTE, A LACQUEY.

LAC. Master says he will be here in a minute.

DOR. It is well.

SCENE XVIII.—DORANTI, DORIMÈNE.

DORI. I am not sure Dorante, but I am taking another

<sup>22</sup> The original has *bourle*, a trick, a joke, from the Italian *burla*; the adjective *burlesque* is still used.

strange step in allowing you to bring me to a house where I know nobody.

DOR. What place then, Madam, would you have my love choose to entertain you, since, to avoid scandal, you do not wish to use either your house or mine.

DORI. But you do not mention that I am insensibly induced every day to receive too many protestations of your passion. I may defend myself as much as I like from them; you are tiring my resistance, and you have a civil kind of obstinacy, which is gently leading me on to whatever you please. It began by frequent visits, then came declarations, which led the way for serenades and entertainments, to be followed by presents. I have opposed all this; but you will not be repelled, and inch by inch you are gaining upon my resolutions. As for me, I can no longer answer for anything, and I believe that in the end you will drive me to matrimony, from which I have held myself so much aloof.

DOR. Upon my word, Madam, you ought to have been there already: you are a widow, and your own mistress; I am my own master, and love you better than my life: what is there to prevent you from completing my happiness from this day forward?

DORI. Great Heavens! Dorante, it requires many qualities on both sides to live happily together, and the two most sensible people in the world often have a difficulty of forming a union with which they shall be satisfied.

DOR. You are jesting, Madam, to imagine so many difficulties; and the experiment which you have tried concludes nothing for others.

DORI. In short, I am always coming back to this; the expenses which I find you launch into for me, make me uneasy for two reasons: one, that they bind me more than I could wish; and the other, that I am sure, no offence to you, that you cannot make them without incommoding yourself; and I do not wish for that.

DOR. Ah! Madam, they are mere trifles, and it is not by that . . .

DORI. I know what I say, and, amongst others, the diamond which you have forced upon me is of a value

DOR. Eh! Madam, I pray, do not put so much value upon a thing which my love thinks unworthy of you, and allow me . . . Here is the master of the house.

SCENE XIX.—M. JOURDAIN, DORIMÈNE, DORANTE.

M. JOUR. (*After having made two bows, finding himself too close to Dorimène*). A little farther away, Madam.

DORI. How?

M. JOUR. One step, if you please.

DORI. What then?

M. JOUR. Fall back a little for the third.

DOR. Madam, M. Jourdain knows how to be genteel.

M. JOUR. Madam, this is a great honour to me, to be sufficiently fortunate, to be so happy, to have the felicity, that you have had the goodness of granting me the favor, of doing me the honour of honouring me with the favour of your presence; and if I had also the merit of meriting a merit like yours, and that Heaven . . . envious of my happiness . . . had accorded me . . . the advantage of finding myself worthy . . . of . . .

DOR. M. Jourdain, that will do. This lady does not like elaborate compliments, and she knows that you are a man of wit (*in a whisper, to Dorimène*). He is an inoffensive citizen, sufficiently ridiculous, as you see, in all his manners.

DORI. (*In a whisper, to Dorante*). It is not very difficult to perceive it.

DOR. Madam, this is my best friend.

M. JOUR. You are doing me too much honour.

DOR. An out and out gallant man.

DORI. I have a great esteem for him.

M. JOUR. I have done nothing yet, Madam, to deserve this favour.

DOR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). Whatever you do, take particular care not to mention the diamond, which you have given her.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Dorante*). May I not even ask her if she likes it?

DOR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). Not for worlds, and take great care you do not! It would be ill-mannered of you; and to act gallantly, you must act as if it

were not you who had made her that present. (*Aloud*).  
M. Jourdain, Madam, says he is enchanted to see you at his house.

DORI. He honours me much.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Dorante*). How obliged I am  
✓ to you, Sir, for speaking thus to her for me.

DOR. (*In a whisper, to M. Jourdain*). I have had a terrible trouble to make her come here.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper, to Dorante*). I do not know what thanks to give you.

DOR. He says, Madam, that he thinks you the most charming person on earth.

DORI. It is a great favour he does me.

M. JOUR. Madam, it is you who do the favours, and

DOR. Let us see about the dinner.

SCENE XX. — M. JOURDAIN, DORIMÈNE, DORANTE, A.  
LACQUEY.

LAC. (*To M. Jourdain*). Every thing is ready, Sir.

DOR. Then let us sit down, and have the musicians in.

SCENE XXI.—*Entry of the Ballet.*

*Six cooks, who have prepared the dinner, dance together, and compose the third interlude; after which they bring in a table covered with several dishes.*

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#### ACT IV.

SCENE I. — DORIMÈNE, M. JOURDAIN, DORANTE, THREE  
MUSICIANS, A LACQUEY.

DORI. How now! Dorante! this is altogether a most magnificent repast.

M. JOUR. You are jesting, madam, and I wish it were more worthy of your acceptance. (*Dorimène, M. Jourdain, Dorante, and the three musicians sit down at the table.*)

DOR. M. Jourdain is right, Madam, in what he says; and he obliges me by doing so well the honours of his

house to you. I agree with him that the repast is not worthy of you. As it is I who ordered it, and as I have not, on that head, the knowledge of some of our friends, you have not here a very studied affair, and you will find many incongruities of good cheer, and many barbarisms of good taste. If Damis had had a hand in this, everything would have been done properly; there would have been elegance and erudition everywhere, and he would not have failed to exaggerate to you himself every item of the repast which he was giving you, and to force you to agree as to his great capacity in the way of gastronomy; to hold forth to you about a fancy bread with golden edges,<sup>64</sup> crusty all round, daintily crackling under your teeth; about a wine, strong-bodied and deep coloured, with a tartness which does not predominate; about a loin of mutton garnished with parsley; about a loin of Norman veal,<sup>65</sup> as long as this, white, delicate, and which tastes, under the teeth, like real almond paste; about partridges of a surprising flavour; and, for his master-piece,<sup>66</sup> about a jelly-broth, followed by a young fat turkey, with young pigeons at the four corners, and crowned with bleached onions and chichory.<sup>67</sup> But as for me, I acknowledge my ignorance; and, as M. Jourdain has very well said, I should wish that the

V feast was more worthy of being offered to you.  
DORI. I only respond to this compliment by eating as I do.

M. JOUR. Ah! what beautiful hands!

DORI. The hands are but middling, M. Jourdain; but you are alluding to the diamond which is very beautiful.

M. JOUR. I, madam? Heaven preserve me from alluding to it; it would not be gallant on my part; and the diamond is of very little consequence.

DORI. You are very fastidious.

M. JOUR. You are too good . . .

<sup>64</sup> The original has *pain de rive à biseaux doré*.

<sup>65</sup> *Veau de rivière* because the calves were reared in Normandy, on the banks of the Seine.

<sup>66</sup> The original has *opéra*, which was often employed in Molière's time for "master-piece."

<sup>67</sup> *Un dindon . . . cantonné de pigeonneaux* is the expression used. *Cantonné*, cantoned, is a heraldic term.

DOR. (*After having given a sign to M. Jourdain*).  
Come, pour some wine to M. Jourdain, and to these gentlemen, who will do us the favour to sing us a drinking song.

J DOR. It gives a marvellous relish to good cheer to mix music with it ; and I find myself admirably entertained here.

M. JOUR. Madam, it is not . . .

DOR. M. Jourdain, let us listen to these gentlemen ; what they will tell us will be worth much more than all that we could say.

FIRST DRINKING SONG.

*First and Second Musicians together, with glasses in their hands.*

A small drop, Phillis, to commence the round.

Ah ! how agreeable and charming a glass looks in your hands !

You and the wine, you lend each other arms,

And I feel my love for both increase,

Between it, you and I, my fair one, let us swear, let us

swear,  
An eternal friendship.

How by wetting your lips, it receives fresh charms !

And how we see your lips embellished by it !

Ah ! both inspire me with envy,

And with you and it, I intoxicate myself with long draughts.

Between it, you and I, my fair one, let us swear, let us

swear,  
An eternal friendship.

SECOND DRINKING SONG.

*Second and Third Musicians together.*

Let us drink, dear friends, let us drink ;

Fleeting time invites us to it.

Let us profit by life

As much as we can.

When we have passed the black gulf,  
Good bye to wine and love.  
Let us make haste to drink,  
For we cannot always drink.

Let us leave arguing to fools !  
On the true happiness of life ;  
Our philosophy  
Places it in the bottle.

Wealth, knowledge and glory,  
Do not do away with carking care ;  
And it is only in drinking,  
That we can be happy.

*All three together.*

Come on, come on : wine everywhere : pour out men,  
pour out ;  
Pour out, pour out always, until we say enough.

DORI. I think no one could sing better ; and it is altogether charming.

M. JOUR. I see her, Madam, something more charming still.

DORI. Indeed ! M. Jourdain is more gallant than I thought.

DOR. How so, Madam ! for whom do you take M. Jourdain.

M. JOUR. I wish she would take me for what I could name.

DORI. What ? Again ?

DOR. (*To Dorimène*). You do not know him.

M. JOUR. She shall know me when it pleases her.

DORI. Oh ! I shall run away.

DOR. He has always got his repartee at hand. But you do not see, Madam, that M. Jourdain eats every morsel which you touch.

DORI. M. Jourdain is a man who charms me.

M. JOUR. If I could charm your heart, I would be . . .



SCENE II.—MRS. JOURDAIN, M. JOURDAIN, DORIMÈNE, DORANTE, MUSICIANS, LACQUEYS.

MRS. JOUR. Ah! ah! I find good company here, and I see plainly that I was not expected. It is for this pretty affair then, husband, that you were so anxious to send me out to dine with my sister! I find a play down below, and here I find a dinner fit for a wedding. That is how you spend your substance; and it is thus that you feast the ladies in my absence, and give them music and comedy, while you send me out of the way.

DOR. What do you mean, Mrs. Jourdain? and what fancies are yours, to take it into your head that your husband spends his substance, and that it is he who gives this entertainment to this lady? Know, pray, that it is I; that he is only lending me his house, and that you ought to be somewhat more careful in what you say.

M. JOUR. Yes, impertinent woman, it is the count who provides all this for this lady, who is a lady of quality. He does me the honour of borrowing my house, and of wishing me to be with him.

MRS. JOUR. That is all stuff: I know what I know.

DOR. Take a better pair of spectacles, Mrs. Jourdain.

MRS. JOUR. I have no need of spectacles, Sir, and I see clearly enough. I have had a scent of this for some time, and I am not a fool. It is very base in you, who are a great lord, to lend a hand, as you do, to the follies of my husband. And you, Madam, for a lady of quality, it is neither handsome nor honest in you, to sow dissension in a family, and to allow my husband to be in love with you.

DOR. What does all this mean? Indeed, Dorante, it is too bad in you to expose me to the silly visions of this foolish woman.

DOR. (*Following Dorimène, who goes out*). Madam . . . Madam! where are you running?

M. JOUR. Madam. . . Count, make my excuses to her, and endeavour to bring her back.

SCENE III.—MRS. JOURDAIN, M. JOURDAIN, LACQUEY.

M. JOUR. Ah! impertinent woman that you are, these

are your nice doings! You come to affront me before everyone; and you drive people of quality from my house!

MRS. JOUR. I do not care about their quality.

M. JOUR. I do not know what hinders me, you cursed woman, from splitting your head with the fragments of the repast which you have come to disturb.

*(The Lacqueys take the table away.)*

MRS. JOUR. *(Going)*. I do not care a bit for all this. I am defending my rights, and I shall have all the women on my side.

M. JOUR. You do well to get out of the way of my fury.

SCENE IV.—M. JOURDAIN, *alone*.

She came back at a most unlucky time. I was in the humour for saying pretty things; and never did I find myself so witty. But what is this?

SCENE V.—M. JOURDAIN; COVIELLE, *disguised*.

Cov. Sir, I do not know whether I have the honour of being known to you.

M. JOUR. No, Sir.

Cov. *(Holding his hand about a foot from the ground)*. I have seen you when you were not taller than this.

M. JOUR. Me?

Cov. Yes. You were the prettiest child in the world, and all the ladies took you in their arms to kiss you.

M. JOUR. To kiss me?

Cov. Yes. I was a great friend of the late gentleman, your father.

M. JOUR. Of the late gentleman, my father?

Cov. Yes. He was a very respectable gentleman.

M. JOUR. How say you?

Cov. I say that he was a very respectable gentleman.

M. JOUR. My father?

Cov. Yes.

M. JOUR. You have known him well?

Cov. Indeed I have.

M. JOUR. And you have known him to be a gentleman?

Cov. Undoubtedly.

M. JOUR. Then I do not know what the world means!

Cov. How?

✓ M. JOUR. There are silly people who would tell me that he was a tradesman.

Cov. He, a tradesman? It is downright slander, he never was one. All that he did, is that he was extremely obliging, and very polite; and as he was a very great judge of stuffs, he went and chose them everywhere, had them carried to his house, and gave them to his friends for money.

M. JOUR. I am delighted to know you, so that you may bear this testimony, that my father was a gentleman.

Cov. I will maintain it before the whole world.

M. JOUR. You will oblige me. What business brings you here?

✓ Cov. Since I knew your late father, a respectable gentleman as I have told you, I have travelled all over the world.

M. JOUR. All over the world?

Cov. Yes.

✓ M. JOUR. I fancy it must be very far to that country.

Cov. Indeed it is. I have come back from all my long travels only within the last four days; and from the interest which I take in everything that relates to you, I have come to announce to you the best news in the world.

M. JOUR. Which?

✓ Cov. You know that the son of the Grand Turk is here?

M. JOUR. I? No.

Cov. How is that? He has the most magnificent retinue; everyone goes to see him, and he has been received in this country as an important nobleman.

M. JOUR. Indeed, I did not know that.

✓ Cov. What is of advantage to you, is that he is in love with your daughter.

M. JOUR. The son of the Grand Turk?

Cov. Yes; and he wishes to be your son-in-law.

✓ M. JOUR. My son-in-law, the son of the Grand Turk!

Cov. The son of the Grand Turk, your son-in-law. As I went to see him, understanding his language perfectly, we were conversing together; and after some talk, he said to me, *Acciam croc soler onch alla moustaph gidelum aman-ahem varahini oussere carbulath*; which means, have you

not seen a handsome young lady, who is the daughter of M. Jourdain, a Parisian gentleman?

M. JOUR. The son of the Grand Turk said that of me?

Cov. Yes. As I answered him that I knew you particularly, and that I had seen your daughter; Ah! said he to me, *marababa sahem*! which means: Ah! how enamoured I am of her!

M. JOUR. *Marababa sahem* means: Ah! how enamoured I am of her?

Cov. Yes.

M. JOUR. Upon my word, you do well to tell me; for, as for me, I should never have thought that *marababa sahem* meant: Ah! how enamoured I am of her! It is an admirable language, this Turkish!

Cov. More admirable than you would think. Do you know at all what *cacaracamouchen* means?

M. JOUR. *Cacaracamouchen*? No.

Cov. That means, My dear soul.

M. JOUR. *Cacaracamouchen* means: My dear soul?

Cov. Yes.

M. JOUR. That is something marvellous! *Cacaracamouchen*, My dear soul. Who would ever think so? That is something that puzzles me.

Cov. In short, to finish my mission, he comes to ask the hand of your daughter; and in order to have a father-in-law that shall be worthy of him, he wishes to make you *mamamouchi*,<sup>80</sup> which is an office of dignity in his country.

M. JOUR. *Mamamouchi*?

Cov. Yes, *Mamamouchi*; that means in our language, Paladine. In short, Paladines are those ancient . . . Paladines. There is nothing more noble in the world; and you will be on a level with the greatest lords of the earth.

M. JOUR. The son of the Grand Turk honours me much, and I pray you to bring him here that I may tender him my thanks.

Cov. Why! he is just coming here.

<sup>80</sup> Nearly all the Turkish of Covielle, which is no Turkish at all, is taken from Rotrou's comedy, *The Sister*. There are, however, a few corrupt Turkish words among them. The word *mamamouchi*, created by Molière, is still used in French.

M. JOUR. He is coming here ?

Cov. Yes ; and he brings everything with him for the ceremony of investing you with your dignity.

M. JOUR. That is very prompt.

Cov. His passion will brook no delay.

M. JOUR. The only thing that perplexes me in this affair is, that my daughter is an obstinate girl who has her head full of a certain Cléonte, and she swears that she shall marry no one but him.

Cov. She will change her mind when she shall see the son of the Grand Turk ; and the most marvellous adventure in this case is, that the son of the Grand Turk resembles this Cléonte, with perhaps a slight difference. I have just seen him ; he has been pointed out to me ; and the love which she has for the one might easily pass to the other, and . . . I hear him coming ; here he is.

SCENE VI.—CLÉONTE, disguised as a Turk; THREE PAGES, carrying Cléonte's jacket; M. JOURDAIN, COVIELLE.

CLE. *Ambousahim oqui boraf, Jordina, salamalequi.*<sup>39</sup>

Cov. (*To M. Jourdain*). That means: M. Jourdain, may your heart be all the year like a rose tree in flower. These are the prepossessing ways of speaking in these countries.

M. JOUR. I am his Turkish Highness' most humble servant.

Cov. *Carigar caboto oustin moraf.*

CLE. *Oustin yoc catamalequi basum base alla moran.*

Cov. He says: May Heaven give you the strength of a lion, and the cunning of a serpent.

M. JOUR. His Turkish Highness honours me too much, and I wish him all sorts of prosperity.

Cov. *Ossa binamen sadoc babally oracaf ouram.*

CLE. *Bel-men.*<sup>40</sup>

Cov. He says you are to go with him quickly to prepare yourself for the ceremony, so that he may see your daughter afterwards, and conclude the marriage.

<sup>39</sup> The last word is the Arabic *salâm aléïqui*, may salvation be on your head ; in familiar French, there exists the word *salamalec*, a very deep bow.

<sup>40</sup> *Bel-men* is perhaps the Turkish *bilmen*, I do not know.

M. JOUR. So many things in two words?

Cov. Yes. The Turkish language is like that, it says much in few words.<sup>41</sup> Go quickly where he wishes you.

SCENE VII.—COVIELLE, *alone*.

Ah! ah! ah! Upon my word this is very funny. What a dupe! If he had learned his part by heart, he could not play it better. Ah! ah!

SCENE VIII.—DORANTE, COVIELLE.

Cov. I beg of you, Sir, to be good enough to assist us in an affair that is going on in this house.

DOR. Ah! ah! Covielle, who would have known you? How you are got up!

Cov. You see. Ah! ah!

DOR. What are you laughing at.

Cov. At something Sir, that well deserves it.

DOR. What?

Cov. I could give you many chances, Sir, to guess the trick of which we are making use with M. Jourdain, to induce him to give his daughter to my master.

DOR. I cannot guess the stratagem; but I can guess that it will not fail to produce its effect, since you have taken it in hand.

Cov. I know, Sir, that the animal is not unknown to you.

DOR. Tell me what it is.

Cov. Take the trouble to draw a little aside to make room for what I perceive coming along. You will be able to see a part of the story, while I tell you the rest.

SCENE IX.—TURKISH CEREMONY.<sup>42</sup> THE MUFTI, DERVISHES, TURKISH ASSISTANTS OF THE MUFTI, *singing and dancing*.

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

*Six Turks enter gravely two by two, to the sound of in-*

<sup>41</sup> This remark of Covielle is taken from Rotrou's comedy, *The Sister*, where a roguish servant also takes six lines to express the meaning of *vare hec*.

<sup>42</sup> The music for this ceremony was by the celebrated Lulli, who acted the part of the mufti.

struments. They carry three carpets, which they lift very high, after having formed several figures with it, while dancing. The singing Turks pass beneath these carpets, and range themselves on both sides of the stage. The mufti, accompanied by the dervishes, close up the procession. Then the Turks lay the carpets on the floor, and kneel down upon them. The mufti and the dervishes remain standing in the midst of them; and, while the mufti invokes Mahomet, making many contortions and grimaces, without uttering a single word, the assistant Turks prostrate themselves on the ground, singing, *Alli*, then raise their hands to heaven, singing, *Allah*; which they continue to do until the end of the invocation, after which they all rise, singing, *Alla eckber*; and two dervishes go and fetch *M. Jourdain*.

SCENE X.—THE MUFTI, DERVISHES, TURKS, singing and dancing, *M. Jourdain* dressed in Turkish costume, his head shaved, without turban or sabre.

MUFTI. (*To M. Jourdain*).

If you know,  
You answer;  
If you do not know,  
You be silent, silent.  
I am the Mufti.

Who are you, you?  
Not understand,  
You be silent.

(*Two dervishes retire with M. Jourdain.*)

SCENE XI.—THE MUFTI, DERVISHES, TURKS, singing and dancing.

MUFTI. Say, Turk, who is that one? An Anabaptist? an Anabaptist?

TURKS. No.

MUFTI. A Zwinglian?

TURKS. No.

MUFTI. A Copht?

TURKS. No.

MUFTI. A Hussite? A Moor? A Contemplative man?

- TURKS. No, no, no.  
 MUFTI. No, no, no. Is he a Pagan?  
 TURKS. No.  
 MUFTI. A Lutheran.  
 TURKS. No.  
 MUFTI. A Puritan?  
 TURKS. No.  
 MUFTI. A Brahmin? A Moffina? A Zurina?<sup>43</sup>  
 - TURKS. No, no, no.  
 MUFTI. No, no, no. A Mahometan? A Mahometan?  
 TURKS. Yes, by Allah!  
 MUFTI. What is his name? What is his name?  
 TURKS. Jourdain, Jourdain<sup>44</sup>  
 MUFTI. (*Jumping and looking on all sides*). Jourdain?  
 Jourdain?  
 TURKS. Jourdain, Jourdain.  
 MUFTI. Mahomet, for Jourdain,  
 I pray, night and morning.  
 ✓ I wish to make a paladine  
 Of Jourdain, of Jourdain.  
 Give the turban, and give the scimitar,  
 With the galley, and the brigantine  
 To defend Palestine.  
 Mahomet, for Jourdain,  
 I pray, night and morning.  
 (*To the Turks*). Will he be a good 'Turk, Jourdain?  
 TURKS. Yes, by Allah.  
 MUFTI. Ha la ba, ba la chou, ba la ba, ba la da.<sup>45</sup>  
 TURKS. Ha la ba, ba la chou, ba la ba, ba la da.

## SCENE XII.

### *Second Entry of the Ballet.*

### Singing and Dancing Turks.

<sup>43</sup> These two last words belong to no known sect.

<sup>44</sup> The whole of this ceremony is written in the *lingua franca*, the language spoken in the Levant. Some of the words used are not correctly spelt. We give the beginning of the original: THE MUFTI. Se ti sabir, ti responder; se non sabir tazir, tazir. Mi star muphti, ti qui star, ti? Non intendir? tazir, tazir.

<sup>45</sup> These words have no sense, but in correcting them we easily get the Turkish words *Allah, baba, hou, Allah, baba*, God, my father, God, God, my father.



## SCENE XIII.—THE MUFTI, DERVISHES, M. JOURDAIN.

*Singing and Dancing Turks.*

*The Mufti comes back with his state turban, which is enormously large, and decorated with four or five rows of lighted candles: he is accompanied by two dervishes who carry the Koran, and who have pointed caps, also decorated with candles.*

*Two other dervishes bring in M. Jourdain, and make him* ✓ *kneel down, the hands on the ground, so that his back, on which is placed the Koran, may serve as a desk to the Mufti, who makes a second burlesque invocation, knitting his eyebrows, and opening his mouth, without saying a word; then speaking vehemently, sometimes softening his tone, sometimes raising it with such an enthusiasm, as to make one tremble, holding his sides with his hands, as if to make the words come out, beating from time to time on the Koran, and turning over the leaves precipitately, after which, lifting his hands to heaven, the Mufti cries in a loud voice, Hou.<sup>46</sup> During this invocation, the Turkish assistants, bowing down and rising alternately, also sing Hou, hou, hou.*

M. JOUR. (*After the Koran has been taken from his back*) Ouf.

MUFTI. (*To M. Jourdain*). You are not a rogue?

TURKS. No, no, no.

MUFTI. Are not a cheat?

TURKS. No, no, no.

✓ MUFTI. (*To Turks*). Give a turban?

TURKS. You are not a rogue?

No, no, no.

Are not a cheat?

No, no, no.

Give a turban.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Hou*, the Arab for him, is one of the names which the Mussulmans give to God.

<sup>47</sup> *Ti non star furba*—No, no, no.—*Non star forfanta*?—No, no, no.—*Donar turbanta*.

*Third Entry of the Ballet.*

*The dancing Turks place the turban on the head of M. Jourdain to the sound of the instruments.*

MUFTI. (*Handing a sabre to M. Jourdain*).

You be noble, not a fable.

Take the sabre.<sup>45</sup>

TURKS. (*Drawing their sabres*).

You be noble, not a fable,

Take the sabre.

*Fourth Entry of the Ballet.*

*The dancing Turks give M. Jourdain several strokes with the sabre, keeping time with the music.*

*Fifth Entry of the Ballet.*

*The dancing Turks give M. Jourdain several strokes with the stick, keeping time to the music.*

MUFTI. They shall give, they shall give,  
The bastonnade.<sup>46</sup>

TURKS. They shall give, they shall give,  
The bastonnade.

MUFTI. Not to have shame  
Is the utmost insult.<sup>46</sup>

TURKS. Not to have shame  
Is the utmost insult.

*The mufti commences a third invocation. The dervishes support him under his arms with respect; after which the singing and dancing Turks, jumping round the mufti, retire with him, taking M. Jourdain with them.*

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ACT V.

SCENE I.—MRS. JOURDAIN, M. JOURDAIN.

MRS. JOURDAIN. Have mercy upon us, good Heaven! What is this? What a figure! Are you going to carry a

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<sup>45</sup> Ti star nobile, non star fabbola—Pigliar schiabbola.

<sup>46</sup> Dara, dara, bastonnara.

<sup>46</sup> Non tener honta;—Questa star l'ultima affronta.

*momon*<sup>51</sup> and is this a time to go out masquerading? Speak, what is all this? Who has dressed you out in this fashion?

M. JOUR. Listen to the impertinent woman! to speak in this manner to a *mamamouchi*!

MRS. JOUR. What is that?

M. JOUR. Yes, you will have to show me a little more respect now. I have just been made a *mamamouchi*.

MRS. JOUR. What do you mean with your *mamamouchi*!

M. JOUR. *Mamamouchi*, I tell you. I am *mamamouchi*.

MRS. JOUR. What sort of animal is that?

M. JOUR. *Mamamouchi*, that means in our language paladine.

MRS. JOUR. *Bladain!*<sup>52</sup> Are you of an age to dance in the ballet?

M. JOUR. What ignorance! I say paladine: it is a dignity with which I have just been invested, with great ceremony.

MRS. JOUR. What ceremony, then?

M. JOUR. *Mahameta per Jordina*.

MRS. JOUR. What does that mean.

M. JOUR. *Jordina*, means Jourdain.

MRS. JOUR. Well! What, Jourdain?

M. JOUR. *Voler far un paladina de Jordina*.

MRS. JOUR. What?

M. JOUR. *Dar turbanta con galera*.

MRS. JOUR. What does it mean, that?

M. JOUR. *Per deffender Palestina*.

MRS. JOUR. What is it you wish to say?

M. JOUR. *Dara, dara, bastonnara*.

MRS. JOUR. What is all this gibberish?

M. JOUR. *Non tener honta, questa star l' ultima af-fronta*.

MRS. JOUR. But what is it, all this?

M. JOUR. (*Singing and dancing*). *Hou la ba, ba la chou, ba la ba, ba la da*. (*He falls to the ground*).

MRS. JOUR. Alas! good Heavens! my husband is gone mad!

<sup>51</sup> See Vol. I., page 46, note 22.

<sup>52</sup> Madam Jourdain is not acquainted with the word "paladine," but knows *baladin*, a ballet-dancer.

M. JOUR. (*Getting up and walking away*). Peace, insolent woman. Show respect to a *mamamouchi*.

MRS. JOUR. (*Alone*). Where could he have lost his senses? I had better run and prevent his going out. (*Perceiving Dorimène and Dorante*). Ah! ah! it wanted nothing but this.<sup>68</sup> I see nothing but grief on all sides.

SCENE II.—DORANTE, DORIMÈNE.

DOR. Yes, Madam, you shall witness the most amusing thing that could be seen; and I do not believe that it  
✓ would be possible to find in the whole world another man  
✓ so mad as this one. And besides, Madam, we must try  
✓ to forward Cléonte's love affair, and to support all his  
masquerade. He is a very gentlemanly man, and one  
who deserves that we should interest ourselves in him.

DORI. I think a great deal of him, and he is worthy of a good fortune.

DOR. In addition to all this, we have here, Madam, a ballet that is owing to us, and which we must take care not to lose; and we must see whether my idea shall not succeed.

DORI. I have noticed some magnificent preparations, but they are things, Dorante, which I can no longer allow.  
✓ Yes, I will make an end of your profusion: and to put a  
stop to all the expenses which I see you make for me, I  
have made up my mind to be married quickly to you.  
That is the real secret; and all these things finish with  
marriage.

DOR. Ah! Madam, is it possible that you can have taken such a sweet resolution for my sake?

DORI. It is only to prevent you from ruining yourself; and without this, I see plainly, that, before long, you will not possess a penny.

DOR. How obliged I am to you, Madam, for the care which you take to preserve my estate! It is entirely yours, as well as my heart, and you shall do with it as you please.

DORI. I shall use them both well. But here comes your man; he has a nice figure.

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<sup>68</sup> In the original *voici justement le reste de notre écu*, "here is just the remainder of our crown," meaning "this completes our misfortune."

## SCENE III.—M. JOURDAIN, DORIMÈNE, DORANTE.

DOR. We come to do homage, Sir, this lady and myself, to your new dignity, and to rejoice with you about the marriage of your daughter with the son of the Grand Turk.

M. JOUR. (*After having bowed in the Turkish fashion*). Sir, I wish you the strength of the serpent and the cunning of the lion.

DORI. I am very glad to be among the first, Sir, to come to congratulate you upon the high degree of honour which you have reached.

M. JOUR. Madam, I wish you all the year your rose-tree in flower. I am infinitely obliged to you for taking an interest in the honours that have come to me ; and I have much joy in seeing you returned here, in order to tender you my humble excuses for the foolish behaviour of my wife.

DORI. Do not mention it ; I can excuse this kind of feeling in her : your heart must be precious to her ; and it is not at all strange that the possession of a man like you must inspire her with some alarm.

M. JOUR. The possession of my heart is a thing which you have entirely acquired.

DOR. You see, Madam, that M. Jourdain is not one of those people who are blinded by prosperity, and that even in his greatness, he knows to value his friends.

DORI. It is the sign of a perfectly generous heart.

DOR. But where is his Turkish Highness ? As your friends we should like to pay our respects to him.

M. JOUR. Here he comes ; and I have sent for my daughter to give him her hand.

SCENE IV.—M. JOURDAIN, DORIMÈNE, DORANTE,  
CLÉONTE, *dressed as a Turk*.

DOR. (*To Cléonte*). Sir, we have come to pay our compliments to your Highness, as friends of this gentleman, your father-in-law, and to assure you respectfully of our humble devotion.

M. JOUR. Where is the dragoman, to tell him who you are, and to make him understand what you say ? You

shall see how he answers you ; he speaks Turkish marvelously. (*To Cléonte*). Hullo ! where the deuce is he gone to ? *Strouf, strif, strof, straf*. This gentleman is *grande segnore, grande segnore, grande segnore*, and this lady, a *granda dama, granda dama*. (*Seeing that he cannot make himself understood*). This gentleman, he, French *mamamouchi*, and Madam, French female *mamamouchi*. I cannot speak more clearly. Good ! here comes the interpreter.

SCENE V.—M. JOURDAIN, DORIMÈNE, DORANTE, CLÉONTE  
*dressed as a Turk, COVIELLE, disguised.*

M. JOUR. Where have you been ? We do not know how to say anything without you. (*Pointing to Cléonte*). Just say this lady and gentleman are people of quality, who have come to pay their respects to him, as my friends, and to assure him of their devotion. (*To Dorimène and Dorante*). You shall see how he will answer..

COV. *Alabala crociam acci boram alabamen.*

CLÉ. *Catalequi tubal ourin soter amalouchan.*

M. JOUR. (*To Dorimène and Dorante*). Do you see ?

COV. He says, may the rain of prosperity at all times water the garden of your family.

M. JOUR. I told you well enough that he speaks Turkish.

SCENE VI.—LUCILE, CLÉONTE, M. JOURDAIN, DORIMÈNE,  
DORANTE, COVIELLE.

M. JOUR. Come, daughter, draw near, and give your hand to this gentleman, who does you the honour of asking you in marriage.

LUC. How now, father, how you are dressed out. Is it a comedy you are playing ?

M. JOUR. No, it is not a comedy ; it is a very serious affair ; one as full of honour for you as you could wish. (*Pointing to Cléonte*). This is the husband whom I give you.

LUC. To me, father !

M. JOUR. Yes, to you. Come, give him your hand ; and thank Heaven for your good fortune.

✓ LUC. I do not wish to marry.

M. JOUR. But I wish it, I, your father.

LUC. I shall do nothing of the kind.

M. JOUR. Ah! what noise! Come, I tell you. Here, your hand.

✓ LUC. No, father; I have told you there is no power which shall force me to take another husband than Cléonte, and I would sooner resolve to every extremity than to . . . (*Recognising Cléonte*). It is true you are my father, I owe you entire obedience; and it is for you to dispose of me according to your will.

M. JOUR. Ah! I am delighted to find you so promptly returned to your duty; and it pleases me much to have a daughter so obedient.

SCENE VII.—MRS. JOURDAIN, CLÉONTE, M. JOURDAIN, LUCILE, DORANTE, DORIMÈNE, COVIELLE.

MRS. JOUR. How now? What is all this? They say that you wish to give your daughter in marriage to a mummer.<sup>64</sup>

M. JOUR. Will you hold your tongue, you impertinent woman? You are always coming to mix your extravagances in everything; there is no possibility of teaching you to be reasonable.

MRS. JOUR. It is you whom there is no teaching to be sensible, and you go from one folly to another. What is your intention? What do you mean to do with all this company?

✓ M. JOUR. I wish to marry our daughter to the son of the Grand Turk.

MRS. JOUR. To the son of the Grand Turk?

M. JOUR. (*Pointing to Covielle*). Yes, pay him your respects through the dragoman, whom you see there.

✓ MRS. JOUR. I have nothing to do with the dragoman; and I will tell him well enough myself, and to his face, that he shall not have my daughter.

M. JOUR. Once more, will you hold your tongue?

DOR. What, Mrs. Jourdain, you oppose yourself to an

<sup>64</sup> The original has *carême-prenant*. See page 227, note 18.

honour like this? You refuse his Turkish Highness for a son-in-law.

MRS. JOUR. Good Heavens! Sir, concern yourself with your own affairs.

DORIM. It is a great honour, which you should not reject.

MRS. JOUR. Madam, I also beg of you not to trouble yourself with what does not concern you.

DOR. It is the friendship we have for you which makes us take an interest in your prosperity.

MRS. JOUR. I will willingly dispense with your friendship.

M. JOUR. Here is your daughter who consents to the wishes of her father.

MRS. JOUR. My daughter consents to marry a Turk?

DOR. Undoubtedly.

MRS. JOUR. She can forget Cléonte?

DOR. What does one not do to become a grand lady?

MRS. JOUR. I would strangle her with my own hands if she played a trick like that.

M. JOUR. There is a lot of cackle! I tell you that this marriage shall take place.

MRS. JOUR. And I tell you that it shall not take place.

M. JOUR. Ah! what noise!

LUC. Mother!

MRS. JOUR. Go, you are a jade.

M. JOUR. (*To Mrs. Jourdain*). What! you quarrel with her for obeying me!

MRS. JOUR. Yes! she belongs to me as well as to you.

COV. (*To Mrs. Jourdain*). Madam!

MRS. JOUR. What do you wish with me, you?

COV. One word.

MRS. JOURDAIN. I do not wish your one word.

COV. (*To M. Jourdain*). Sir, if she will but listen to one word in private, I promise you to make her consent to your wishes.

MRS. JOUR. No.

M. JOUR. (*To Mrs. Jourdain*). Hear him.

MRS. JOUR. No, I shall not hear him.

M. JOUR. He will tell you . . .



MRS. JOUR. I do not wish you to tell me anything.

M. JOUR. Look at the great obstinacy of the woman ! Will it do you any harm to listen ?

COV. Do but hear me, afterwards you shall do as you please.

MRS. JOUR. Very well ! What ?

COV. (*In a whisper to Mrs. Jourdain*). For the last hour we have been making signals to you. Do not you see that all this is done to accommodate ourselves to the fancies of your husband ; that we are deceiving him under this disguise ; and that it is Cléonte himself who is the son of the Grand Turk ? . . .

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper to Covielle*). Ah ! ah !

COV. (*In a whisper to Mrs. Jourdain*). And that it is I, Covielle, who am the dragoman ?

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper to Covielle*). In that case I surrender.

COV. (*In a whisper to Mrs. Jourdain*). Pretend to know nothing of the matter.

MRS. JOUR. (*Aloud*). Yes, it is all over. I consent to the match.

M. JOUR. Ah ! Every one becomes reasonable. (*To Mrs. Jourdain*). You would not hear him. I know well enough that he would explain to you what the son of the Grand Turk was.

MRS. JOUR. He has explained it to me properly, and I am satisfied with it. Let us send for the notary.

DOR. That is well said. And so that you may have your mind altogether at ease, Mrs. Jourdain, and may do away from this day with all the jealousy that you may have conceived about your husband, this lady, and I, we will make use of the same notary to get married.

MRS. JOUR. I also consent to this.

M. JOUR. (*In a whisper to Dorante*). It is to hoodwink her.

DOR. (*In a whisper to M. Jourdain*). We must amuse her with this feint.

M. JOUR. Good, good. (*Aloud*). Let them go and fetch the notary.

DOR. In the meantime, while he is coming, and draws

up the contracts, let us see our ballet, and let us give the entertainment to his Turkish Highness.

M. JOUR. Well thought of. Let us go and take our seats.

MRS. JOUR. And Nicole.

M. JOUR. I give her to the dragoman, and my wife to whosoever will take her.

Cov. Sir, I am obliged to you. (*Aside*). If it be possible to find a bigger fool, I will go and publish it in Rome. (*The comedy finishes by a ballet, which had been prepared*).

### BALLET OF THE NATIONS.

#### FIRST ENTRY.

(*A man comes to hand round the books of the ballet, who immediately is worried by a multitude of people of different provinces, who cry to have some music, and by three troublesome fellows, who are dogging his footsteps.*)

#### DIALOGUE OF THE PEOPLE,

*Who ask books to the accompaniment of music.*

ALL. To me, Sir, to me pray, to me, Sir; a book, if you please, to your humble servant.

A FASHIONABLE GENTLEMAN.<sup>65</sup> Distinguish us, Sir, from amongst the folks that shout: Some books here, the ladies beg of you.

ANOTHER. Hullo! Sir, Sir, have the kindness to throw some to our side.

A FASHIONABLE LADY. Good Heavens! how little honour is paid to people of importance in this house!

ANOTHER. They have no books or seats, except for *grisettes*.<sup>66</sup>

A GASCON.<sup>67</sup> Ah! you man with the books, just give me some. My lungs are already tired out. Do not you

<sup>65</sup> In the original, *homme du bel air*.

<sup>66</sup> This word was used, in Molière's time, to designate "citizen's daughters."

<sup>67</sup> The Gascons speak in their dialect, which consists chiefly of using a *δ* for a *v*, as *libres* for *livres*, *bous* for *vous*, *boyes* for *voyes*, and also using *v* for *δ*, as *varon* for *baron*; they also accent all *e's* as *jé, qué, mé*.

see that everyone laughs at me, and that I am scandalized to see in the hands of the rabble what is being refused to me by you.

ANOTHER. He ! zounds, you sir, consider who one may be. A book, I pray you, for the Baron of Asvarat. Upon my word, I think that the coxcomb has not the honour of knowing me.

A SWISS. You, mister giver away of paper,<sup>55</sup> what means this way of acting ; I am crying my very throat to pieces, without being able to obtain a book. Upon my word, you Sir, I think that you are drunk.

AN OLD CHATTERING CITIZEN. Of all this, plainly speaking, I am very ill-satisfied ; and it is far from nice that our daughter, so well-made and so pretty, the object of so many lovers, should not have, according to her wish, a book of the ballet, to read up the subject of the entertainment about to be given ; and that all our family should so stylish have dressed themselves to be placed at the top of the hall where the interlopers<sup>56</sup> are generally placed. Of all this, plainly speaking, I am very ill-satisfied, and it is far from nice.

OLD CHATTERING FEMALE CITIZEN. It is quite true, it is a shame ; the blood rushes to my face ; and this poetaster, who overlooks the principals, understands his business very badly. He is a brute—no better than a horse—a downright animal, to take so little notice of a girl who is the principal ornament of the neighbourhood of the Palais-Royal, and with whom, only a few days ago, a count opened the ball. He understands his business badly ; he is a brute—no better than a horse—a downright animal.

FOPS, MALE AND FEMALE, TOGETHER. Ah ! what a noise ! what a row ! what chaos ! what a medley ! what confusion ! what strange uproar ! what disorder ! what tumult ! One is being dried up here. One can no longer bear it.

GASCON. Zounds ! I am entirely yours.

<sup>55</sup> The Swiss uses his dialect, of which we give the two first lines : "*Mon'sieur le donneur de papieir, que veul dire sti façon de s'f're.*"

<sup>56</sup> The original has *les gens de l'entrignet*, of which the meaning is only conjectural.

ANOTHER. I am bursting with rage, hang it !

SWISS. Ah ! how hot it is in this room !

GASCON. I am choking !

ANOTHER. I am losing my breath !

SWISS. Upon my word, I would like to be outside.

OLD CHATTERING CITIZEN. Come, my dear, follow my steps I pray you, and do not leave me. They take too little notice of us ; and I am tired of this tumult. All this row, this confusion, is too much for me. If ever the inclination takes me to return, any day of my life, to comedy or ballet, I hope they may maim me. Come, my dear, follow my steps, I pray you, do not leave me ; and they take too little notice of us.

*Old Chattering Female Citizen.* Come along my pet, my son, let us get back to our domicile. And let us depart from this hole where one cannot sit down. They will be astonished enough when they'll find us gone. Too much confusion reigns in this room ; and I would sooner be in the midst of the market. If ever I come back to a similar feast, I will allow them to slap my face half-a-dozen times. Come along, my pet, my son, let us go back to our domicile, and depart from this hole where one cannot sit down.

ALL. To me, Sir, to me, pray, to me, Sir ; a book if you please, to your humble servant.

#### SECOND ENTRY.

*The three troublesome fellows dance.*

#### THIRD ENTRY.

*(Three Spaniards singing).<sup>60</sup>*

I know that I am dying with love, and I court grief. Though dying with desire, I fade with so much grace, that what I desire to suffer is more than what I suffer ; and the severity of my grief does not exceed my desire for it. I know, &c., &c.

Fate treats me with so forbearing a pity, that it assures me life in the danger of death. To live of so terrible a

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<sup>60</sup> The original is in Spanish.

stroke is the prodigy of my deliverance. I know, &c., &c. (*Eight Spaniards dance.*)

1ST SPANIARD. (*Singing*). Ah! how foolish to complain of love, so harshly! of the little boy who is gentleness itself! Ah! what folly! ah! what folly!

2D SPANIARD. (*Singing*). Grief torments him who abandons himself to grief; and no one dies of love, unless it is the one who does not know how to love.

BOTH SPANIARDS. To die of love is sweet when one is repaid; and if we enjoy it to-day, why will you trouble death?

1ST SPANIARD. (*Singing*). Let the lover rejoice and take my advice; for when one desires, everything is to find the means.

THE THREE TOGETHER. Come, let us have feasting and dancing. Let us be gay gay, gay: grief is nothing but a fancy.

#### FOURTH ENTRY—ITALIANS.

*An Italian female musician sings the first recital in the following words.*

Having<sup>a</sup> armed my breast with sternness, I revolted against Cupid; but I was conquered, with the swiftness of lightning, by looking at two fair eyes. Ah! how little can a heart of ice resist a dart of fire!

My torture is, however, so dear to me, and my wound so sweet, that my pain causes me to be happy, and that to cure me would be tyranny. Ah! the more violent the love, the more charms has it and causes the more pleasure.

*After the musician has sung this air, two Scaramouches, two Trivelins, and a Harlequin, represent, in the Italian manner, to the accompaniment of music, night to be falling.<sup>b</sup> An Italian musician joins the female musician, and sings with her the following words:—*

MUSICIANS. The glorious time which is flying past, takes

<sup>a</sup> The original is in Italian.

<sup>b</sup> The falling night was represented by the actors wrapping themselves in dark cloaks, passing slowly across the stage, keeping time to slow music.

also our pleasures away ; in the school of love one must profit by the opportunity.

FEMALE MUSICIAN. As long as our blooming age smiles upon us, which, alas, too promptly leaves us.

BOTH. Let us sing, let us enjoy ourselves in the beautiful days of our youth ; a thing lost is never recovered.

FEMALE MUSICIAN. A fair eye enchains many hearts ; its wounds are sweet ; the pain it causes is happiness.

FEMALE. But when icy old age comes, the stagnant heart has no longer any fire.

BOTH. Therefore let us sing and enjoy ourselves in the beautiful days of our youth ; a good thing lost is never recovered.

*After the Italian dialogues, the Scaramouches and Trivelins perform a merry dance.*

#### FIFTH ENTRY—FRENCH.

*Two Musicians from Poitou dance and sing the following words :—*

FIRST MINUET. Ah ! how beautiful it is in these groves, what a glorious day does Heaven send us.

ANOTHER MUSICIAN. The nightingale, beneath this verdant foliage, warbles to the echoes the song of his sweet return. This beauteous spot, these glorious woods, this beauteous spot invites us to love.

SECOND MINUET. (*Both together*). Behold, dear Climène, 'neath this old oak, these love-sick birds cooing. Nothing obstructs them in their desires ; their hearts are filled with their sweet flames ; how happy they are ! We both might likewise, if you so wish it, be as happy as they.

*Six other Frenchmen come afterwards, beautifully dressed in the Poitou costume, three men and three women, accompanied by eight flutes and hautboys, and dance some minuets.*

#### SIXTH ENTRY.

*The whole finishes up by a medley of the three nations, and the applause expressed in dancing and music by the whole of the spectators on the scene, who sing the following two verses :—*

What charming spectacle, what pleasures are we enjoying,  
The gods themselves have none so sweet as these.

**PSYCHÉ.**  
**TRAGÉDIE-BALLET.**

**PSYCHE.**  
**A TRAGEDY-BALLET IN FIVE ACTS.**

*(THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.)*

**JANUARY 17TH, 1671.**





## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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SINCE the death of Cardinal Mazarin, representations of operas were no longer in vogue; and in the beginning of Louis XIV.'s reign, it was thought that no audience could endure music for three hours. Tragedies were attempted, with songs and dances in the interludes; but Lulli and Quinault first showed that all emotions could be expressed by music. In 1670, the King wished a play to be written, in which tragedy, music, and splendid stage-display should be united, and Molière was entrusted with the composition of it. In the preface of the bookseller to the reader, we see what share he had in *Psyché*—for so was the tragedy called—and what the great poet Pierre Corneille, then sixty-five years old, wrote of it. All the words that were sung were written by Quinault, and the music was by Lulli. *Psyché* was first represented at the Tuileries, on the 17th of January 1671, before Louis XIV., the Dauphin, Monsieur, Mademoiselle d'Orléans, and the whole court, and was afterwards repeated several times before the same high-born audience. It was acted, with somewhat diminished splendour, in the theatre of the Palais-Royal, on the 24th of July of the same year, and had thirty-eight consecutive representations.

The first idea of *Psyché* is to be found in *The Golden Ass*, a romance of the second century of the Christian era, written in Latin, by Apuleius, a Greek. An old woman relates the following story to a young damsel, who is a prisoner of "savage robbers." It is in the fifth episode of the fourth, fifth, and sixth books, and is called *Cupid and Psyche*. We give it in an abbreviated form:—

"Once upon a time, in a certain city, there lived a king and a queen, and they had three fair daughters. The transcendent loveliness of the younger baffled the power of human language, and the inhabitants of the country worshipped her, as if she had been Venus herself. This incensed the Goddess, and she sent for her winged son Cupid, and implored him to punish the contumacious beauty, and to inspire her heart with ardent love for a miserable grovelling outcast. Psyche, in spite of her matchless loveliness, found no suitors, and her father, suspicious of the enmity of the Celestials, consulted the ancient oracle of Apollo, which said that the maid should be left on a rock, in bridal dress arrayed, to find as bridegroom 'a wicked, cruel, viperous elf.' She proceeded to the lofty rock, and was left there. Suddenly the mild breath of Zephyrus blew a gentle breeze, and, tenderly lifting her adown the mountain height, laid her in the flowery lap of the valley below, where there was a spacious, extensive palace, not formed by human hands, wherein she entered, and was waited upon by invisible beings, and entertained with songs and music by invisible musicians. Psyche had retired to rest, when, at the dead

of night, a gentle murmuring sound fell upon her ears. Before the dawn of day, the invisible spouse of Psyche had left her and fled far away, and the voices as before came to render homage to their mistress, and hail the new-made bride. By dint of supplications and remonstrances she obtained permission from her husband—who remained always invisible—to see her sisters, but he strictly enjoined her to keep the invisibility of his form a profound secret. The sisters came, and Psyche gave them valuable presents, which only made them very envious. At last they pressed her so often, that she betrayed her husband's secret. They then told her that her own life was in danger, that her husband was a serpent, and advised her to hide a lamp and sharp knife, and when he was asleep, completely to cut off his head. Now when her husband came, and was overwhelmed with sound sleep, Psyche arose, intending to fulfil her purpose, but the rays of the light showed that her spouse was no other than the beautiful God of love, Cupid himself. She stood entranced, when a drop of scalding oil spirted on Cupid's right shoulder. Up sprang the scalded deity, and in spite of Psyche's repeated entreaties, immediately flew away. She wished to drown herself; but the gentle river tossed her unhurt and safe upon a tuft of green grass. The forlorn young wife was wandering all over the country, in search of her recreant husband; her two sisters, as a reward for their perfidy, had been dashed to death against the rocks. Her prayers to Ceres and Juno to grant her assistance were ineffectual, as these goddesses did not like to offend Venus, who was incensed against her, because Cupid had fallen in love with Psyche, instead of avenging his mother. At last the wretched young wife falls into Venus's hands, who immediately flew violently upon her, and, rending open the bosom of her dress, and tearing her clothes in a great many places, shook her by the head, pulled out her hair by the roots, and otherwise grievously ill-used her. Then she commanded her to separate an enormous heap of mixed seeds of wheat, barley, millet, poppy, vetches, lentils, and beans, in which she is assisted by ants who perform the task for her. Another day Venus told her to fetch some wool of a flock of savage sheep, grazing on the brink of whirling eddies. A benevolent reed showed her a grove, where, on the branches of the bushes, she found the golden wool which she needed. Another day she is sent with a crystal flagon to fill it with icy water of the highest spring, on the topmost summit of craggy and distant mountains. An eagle came, seized the flagon in its beak, and flapping its pinions as it steered its course, had it filled, and returned with it to Psyche. Then Venus sent her with a box to Proserpine, in the deadly abode of Pluto, to request some of the beauty of the goddess of the infernal regions, were it only sufficient to last a short winter's day. She started with two barley-cakes and two pieces of money; the cakes to be given to Cerberus, the coins to Charon, and finally returns to the bright light of day with the box which Proserpine had given her. But irresistible curiosity seized her. She wished to take to herself a morsel of divine beauty, were it only for the sake of fascinating her own beautiful lover. She opened the box, from which immediately arose an infernal, somniferous, truly Stygian vapour, which made her fall down with limbs collapsed, and motionless as a corpse. But Cupid, who had recovered from the effects of his burn, flew away from his mother's palace, and cutting through the air with more than ordinary rapidity, very soon reached Psyche, whom he relieved from the obnoxious vapour; thence darted to the abode of Jupiter, before whom he pleaded the pardon of Psyche submissively. The father of gods and men granted it, saying: The good service that I render thee now thou mayest one day requite, if peradventure a maiden of more than common beauty chance to fall in thy way. He then ordered Mercury to find Psyche, and bring her up to Heaven, gave her a cup of ambrosia, to make her immortal, affianced Cupid to her, and in due time she was brought to bed of a daughter, whom we call Pleasure."

It is clear that Apuleius, in this fable, wished to represent allegorically the career of the human soul, through scenes of mortal tribulation, to a state of celestial beatitude after death. But he also desired to teach, I suppose, that we, mortals, ought not to endeavour to fathom the mystery of happiness: that we should not scrutinize too much men's actions, but accept with gratitude that which the gods in their wisdom have provided for us!

In the thirteenth century, Denys Piramus, the author of *Partenopeus of Blois*, treated the story of Psyche from a chivalric point of view. The

Spanish dramatist Calderon composed on the same subject an *auto sacramental*, in which Eros represents the Saviour, Psyche the soul of the faithful aspiring to go to Him, and the marriage of the two lovers the union of God and man in the Eucharist. That great painter Raphael has also immortalized the Greek story by a series of twelve pictures, and by thirty-two drawings, which have been engraved.

La Fontaine published in 1669 his tale, *The Loves of Psyche and Cupid*; and among the three friends to whom the author pretends that he read his work, one of them, Gélaste, who is said to stand for Molière, defends laughter and comedy against tragedy.

Molière had already sketched the plan of his play, written the Prologue, the first Act, and the first Scene of the second and third Acts, when Louis XIV. expressed his will to have *Psyché* finished before Lent. Molière, therefore, took Pierre Corneille, then sixty-five years old, to assist him, and the latter wrote the other scenes in a fortnight. Quinault wrote the words of the songs; and Lulli, the composer of the music, added the Italian verses of the first interlude.

The tragédie-ballet *Psyché* is not unworthy of the illustrious men who had a hand in it. The grand scene of the second Act between the king and his daughter is generally considered very heart-stirring; and it is not impossible that Molière may have written it under the impression of some loss which he deeply felt. Some commentators suppose that his eldest son died about this time; but this is impossible, for the child died in the same year in which he was born (1664).<sup>1</sup> The appearance of the two princes in the infernal regions possesses almost a Shakspearean grandeur. Psyche, declaring her love to Cupid, is one of the most tender and natural speeches of the French stage; and as a whole, everything Corneille has written in this tragedy bears the impress of his lofty genius, and of his masterly handling of verse.

The difference between the influences which envy works in the characters of Psyche's two sisters, Aglaura and Cydippe, is also finely delineated, and reminds one of the brother and sister of Clarissa Harlowe.

The author of the pamphlet *Histoire de la Guérin* (See Introductory Notice to the *Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. II.) says that Baron, who had quarrelled with Madame Molière during the performance of *Milicerte*, (see Introductory Notice to *Milicerte*, Vol. I.,) and had left Molière and his troupe, made his re-appearance as Cupid in *Psyché*. He was only eighteen years old; but Molière's wife is rumoured to have changed her hatred of the youthful actor into a feeling of warm affection and love, to which Baron is accused of having responded. I have already said that the scandalous gossip from behind the wings ought hardly to deserve any credence.

In 1678, seven years after the *Psyché* of Molière and Corneille, an opera was brought out, of which the words were by Fontenelle, and the music by Lulli. It was only a transformation of the original play, with the classical ending, and with several of the songs of the old *tragédie-ballet*.

The book of the billet of *Psyché* has, by some commentators of Molière, been held as having been written by himself. We dare not decide that question; but we do not print it, because the chief difference between the interludes given in the book, and those as produced by us, is,

<sup>1</sup> Eud. Soulié, *Recherches sur Molière*.

that in the first, each of the principal divinities only declaims a *ricci*, whilst in the latter, they sing also a song.

Thomas Heywood, the English dramatist, wrote a play, *Love's Mistress; or, the Queen's Masque*, which was published in 1636. The second title was added from its having been acted at court. It is the story of Cupid and Psyche, based upon Apuleius; and Apuleius himself appears as the presenter, and explains the meaning of the allegory, as it goes on, to his collocutor Midas. There is in this play a contention between Apollo and Pan, in which the clown, the champion of the latter divinity, sings a song, and states that the God of Verse is not like Pan, nor like a dripping-pan, a frying-pan, a pudding-pan, or a warming-pan. Midas, who is the umpire of the contest—probably on account of his long ears—adjudges the victory to Pan, whom "all the year we follow, but *semel in anno videt Apollo*."

Thomas Shadwell wrote also a *Psyché*, which is chiefly taken from Molière's play of the same name, with some additions. It was brought out at the theatre, Dorset Garden, in February 1673, splendidly set out with new scenes, machinery, dances, and costly dresses, and was very successful. It was the first piece Shadwell wrote in verse; hence, says Langbaine, "most of the Crambo-poets were up in arms against it."

## THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER.

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THIS work was not all done by one hand, M. Quinault wrote the words which were set to music, except the Italian complaint. M. Molière drew the plan of the piece, and regulated the disposition, in which he regarded beauty and pomp of spectacle more than exact regularity. As for the versification, he had not time to do it. The Carnival approached; and the pressing orders of the King, who wished to have this magnificent entertainment represented several times before Lent, obliged him to allow a little assistance. Thus only the prologue, the first act, the first scene of the second, and the first of the third acts were put into verse by him. M. Corneille employed a fortnight on the rest; and, by these means, his Majesty was served, in the time he commanded.\*

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\* It is supposed that this preface of the bookseller was written by Molière himself.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JUPITER.

VENUS.

CUPID.

ZEPHYR.\*

ÆGIALE, }  
PHÆNE, } *Graces.*

THE KING, *father to Psyche.*

PSYCHE.

AGLAURA, }  
CYDIPPE, } *Psyche's sisters.*

CLEOMENES, }  
AGENOR, } *in love with Psyche.*

LYCAS, *Captain of the guards.*

A RIVER GOD.

TWO SMALL CUPIDS.

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\* This part was played by Molière himself; and small as it was, he managed to give it a certain individuality.





# PSYCHE.

(PSYCHÉ.)

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## PROLOGUE.

*The scene represents in front of the stage a rustic spot, and at the back, a rock with an opening in the middle, through which the sea appears in the distance.*

*Flora is seen in the midst of the stage, accompanied by Vertumnus, god of the flowers and trees, and by Palemon, god of the streams. Each of these gods conducts a troop of divinities; one has in his train dryads and sylvens, and the other river-gods and naiads.*

*Flora sings the following lines to invite Venus to descend to the earth :—*

War has ceased ; the most powerful of kings interrupts his exploits to give peace to the world.<sup>4</sup> Descend, mother of Cupid, come and bestow upon us glorious days.

*Vertumnus and Palemon, with the divinities by which they are accompanied, join their voices to that of Flora, and sing the following words :—*

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<sup>4</sup> Peace was signed at Aix-la-Chapelle on the 2d of May 1668,

*Chorus of divinities of the earth and the streams, composed of Flora, nymphs, Palemon, Vertumnus, sylvals, fauns, dryads, and naiads.*

We taste profound peace ; the sweetest games are here below. We owe this rest, so full of charms, to the greatest king in the world. Descend, mother of Cupid, and bestow upon us glorious days.

*Then follows an entry of the ballet, composed of two dryads, four sylvals, two streams, and two naiads ; after which Vertumnus and Palemon sing the following dialogue :—*

VER. Surrender, cruel fair ones, it is now your turn to sigh.

PAL. Behold the queen of beauty, who comes to inspire love.

VER. A beauteous object, ever severe, can never be loved well.

PAL. Beauty may be first to please, but gentleness ends by charming.

THE TWO TOGETHER. Beauty may be first to please, but gentleness ends by charming.

VER. Let us suffer love to wound us ; let us languish, since we must.

PAL. What is the use of a heart without tenderness ? Can there be a greater fault ?

VER. A beauteous object, ever severe, can never be loved well.

PAL. Beauty may be first to please, but gentleness ends by charming.

*Flora answers the dialogue of Vertumnus and Palemon by this minuet ; and the other divinities join their dances to it.*

Is it wise, in the flower of life, is it wise, not to love ? Let us hasten to taste the pleasures here below, unceasingly. The wisdom of youth is to know how to enjoy its pleasures. Love charms those whom he disarms ; love charms ; let us all yield to him. Vain would be our efforts to resist his darts ; with whatever chains a lover may burden himself, liberty has nothing half so sweet.

*Venus descends from the heavens in a great machine, with her son Cupid, and the two little graces called Ægiale and Phæne; and the divinities of the earth and streams begin to unite their voices, and continue by their dances to testify their joy at her arrival.*

*Chorus of all the Divinities of the Earth and Streams.*

We taste profound peace; the sweetest games are here below. We owe this rest, so full of charms, to the greatest king in the world. Descend, mother of Cupid, and bestow upon us glorious days.

VEN. (*In her machine*). Cease, cease for me those songs of joy; such rare honours do not belong to me; and the homage which your goodness now addresses to me, ought to be reserved for sweeter charms. It is too old a method to come and pay your court to me; everything has its turn, and Venus is no longer in fashion. There are other new-born attractions to which incense is offered. Psyche, Psyche, the fair one, now-a-days takes my place. Already the whole universe hastens to adore her; and it is too much that, in my disgrace, I still find some one who deigns to honour me. People do not hesitate between the merits of us both; everyone has been bold enough to leave my side, and of the numerous crowd of favourite Graces, whose cares and friendship followed me everywhere, there remains nothing to me but two of the smallest, who accompany me out of pity. Allow these sombre abodes to lend their solitude to my troubled heart, and let me, amidst their shadows, hide my shame and grief.

*Flora and the other divinities retire, and Venus, with her retinue, descends from the machine.*

ÆG. We do not know how to act, goddess, in this grief beneath which we see you bowed down. Our respect tells us to keep silent, while our zeal tells us to speak.

VEN. Speak; but if you, by your attentions, aspire to please me, leave all your counsels for another time; and do not speak of my anger, unless it be to tell me that I am right. It was there, it was there, that the most poignant

offence was given that my divinity could ever receive ; but, if the gods have any power, I shall have my revenge.

PH. You have more sense and wisdom than we have to judge what may be worthy of you ; but, as for me, I should have thought that a great goddess ought to have put herself less in a rage.

VEN. And this<sup>b</sup> is the very reason of my great anger. The more exalted my rank, the more glaring becomes the insult ; and did I not hold such a supreme degree, the resentment of my heart would be less violent. I, the daughter of the god who launches the thunderbolts ; mother of the god who inspires love ; I, the most ardently wished-for by Heaven and earth, and who was born but to charm ; I, who have seen so many vows offered at my altars by everything that breathes, and who, by immortal rights, have held the sovereign empire of beauty at all times ; I, whose eyes have induced two great deities to concede to me the prize of being the most beautiful, I behold my victory and my rights disputed by a puny mortal ! The ridiculous excess of a mad obstinacy goes so far as to oppose to me a little girl ! I have continually to listen to a rash judgment between her features and mine ; and from the height of the Heavens in which I shine, I have to hear prejudiced mortals exclaim : She is more beautiful than Venus !

ÆG. That is how people do ; it is men's style ; they are impertinent in their comparisons.

PH. In the age in which we live now, they cannot praise without at the same time outraging some of the greatest names.

VEN. Ah ! how well the insolent sternness of these three words avenge Juno and Pallas, and consoles their hearts for the brilliant glory which the famous apple conferred upon my charms ! I see them applauding themselves about my uneasiness, affecting at each moment a malicious laugh, and with a stare, searching out anxiously my confusion in my eyes. Their triumphant joy, in the midst of such an outrage, seems to come and tell me, as an insult to my anger : Boast, boast, Venus ! of the traits of your counte-

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<sup>b</sup> This speech of Venus is an imitation of the one which the same goddess utters in Apuleius' *Golden Ass*.

nance! In the judgment of one only you vanquished us; but, in the judgment of all, a simple mortal has the advantage over you. Ah! this blow finishes me; it pierces my heart; I can no longer suffer this unparalleled severity; the raptures of my rivals are, in addition to my poignant sorrow, too much. My son, if ever I had any influence with you, and if ever I were dear to you, if your heart be capable of feeling the resentment which troubles the heart of a mother who so tenderly loves you, then employ, employ now the effort of your power to sustain my interests; and, by your darts, make Psyche feel the darts of my revenge. To make her heart miserable, take one of your darts most calculated to please me, the most poisonous of those which you launch forth in your anger. Make her become enamoured to madness of the vilest, basest, and most horrible mortal, so that she may suffer the most cruel torture of loving and not being beloved.

CUP. Nothing but complaints about Cupid are heard in this world; everywhere a thousand sins committed are imputed to me, and you would not believe the harm and the nonsense that are told of me every day. If to serve your anger . . .

VEN. Go, do not oppose the wishes of your mother; do not apply any arguments, except to look out for the most opportune moments to bring a sacrifice to my outraged glory. Depart, for all response to my solicitations; and see me not again until I am avenged.

*Cupid flies away, and Venus retires with the Graces. The scene changes to a large town, with palaces and houses, of different architecture, on both sides of the stage.*

## ACT I.

### SCENE I.—AGLAURA, CYDIPPE.

AGL. There are ills, sister, which silence embitters; let us, therefore, give speech to your grief and mine, and lay bare the burning resentment of our hearts to each other. We are sisters in misfortune; and yours and mine are so intimately connected, that we can mix the two into one,

and, in our righteous indignation, bewail, in common plaint, the cruelties of our fate. What mysterious fatality, sister, subjects the whole universe to the charms of our youngest sister, and why, of the various princes whom accident brings to this spot, does it not throw one into our chains? What! to see from every part all hearts eager to yield to her, and pass by our attractions without wishing to be stayed by them! What fate has befallen our eyes, and what have they done to the gods, that they think them not worthy to enjoy any homage amidst all these tributes of glorious sighs, the proud advantage of which causes others to triumph? Can there be for us, sister, a more signal disgrace than to see all hearts despise our charms, and to behold the happy Psyche insolently rejoicing in a crowd of lovers bound to her steps!

CYD. Ah! sister, it is an adventure to make us lose our senses, and all the other ills of nature are nothing in comparison.

AGL. As for me, it often brings the tears to my eyes. It takes away all pleasure, all rest; against misfortune like this, my constancy is without arms. This grief, for ever present to my mind, keeps before my eyes the disgrace of our charms, and the triumph of Psyche. At night, the thought of it is eternally recurring, and prevails over all else. Nothing can drive away this cruel image; and no sooner comes sweet slumber to free me from it, than some dream immediately recalls it to my senses, and awakens me with a start.

CYD. This is my martyrdom, sister; in your words I see myself; and you have just said what passes within me.

AGL. But once more, let us argue a little upon this affair. In what lies her powerful charms? And by what, tell me, has she acquired the honour of that grand secret of pleasing by her slightest looks? What do they see in her to inspire so much passion? What right of beauty gives her the empire over all hearts? She has some charms, some of the brilliancy of youth; we are agreed upon that; I do not gainsay it. But if we concede to her a great deal on the score of age, are we entirely without charms? Are our figures such as to be sneered at? Have we not some fine features and some attractions, com-

plexions, eyes, air, and build to fasten some lovers in our chains. Sister, do me the favour of speaking frankly. Am I made in such a manner, tell me, that my merit should give way to hers? And do you find that she outshines me in dress?

CYD. What? you, sister. Not at all. Yesterday, at the hunt, near her, I looked at you for a long time, and, without wishing to flatter you, I thought that you were by far the handsomer. But I say, sister, without wishing to flatter me, are they visions which I take into my head, when I think myself made to merit the glory of some conquest?

AGL. You, sister, you have, without disguising aught, everything to inspire an amorous flame. Your slightest actions shine with charms which touch my heart, and were I other than woman, I should be your lover.

CYD. Whence comes it, then, that she obtains the victory over us; that at the first glance all hearts lay down their arms, and that by no tribute of sighs and vows the least honour is paid to our charms?

AGL. All ladies, with one voice, think very little of her attractions: and I think, sister, that I have discovered the cause of the number of lovers whom she holds beneath her sway.

CYD. As for me, I guess it; and it is to be presumed that some mystery must be concealed underneath this. This secret of inflaming everybody is not a common effect of nature; the art of Thessalia has something to do with this;\* and no doubt, some charm has been given to her to make herself beloved.

AGL. My belief is founded upon a more solid basis; and the charm which she possesses for gaining all hearts is simply an air at all times devoid of sternness, caressing looks seconded by her mouth, a smile full of sweetness, which holds out a welcome to everyone, and which promises you nothing but kindness. Our glory now-a-days is no longer kept up; and we are no longer in the age of that noble haughtiness, which, by a dignified attempt at illustrious cruelties, wished to test the constancy of a

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\*Thessalia was renowned in classical times for its magicians.

lover. We have, indeed, come down, in the present age, from all this noble pride which suited us so well; and, unless we absolutely throw ourselves at men's heads, we are reduced to hope no longer for anything.<sup>1</sup>

CYD. Yes, that is the secret of the affair; and I see that you understand the matter better than I. It is because we keep too much to our decorum that no lover wishes to come to us, sister; we are too anxious to maintain the honour of our sex and of our birth. Men now-a-days love those who smile upon them; hope, more than love, is what attracts them; and it is through this that Psyche robs us of all the lovers whom we see beneath her empire. Let us follow, let us follow the example, and accommodate ourselves to the times; let us lower ourselves, sister, to make advances, and care no longer about that sad propriety which deprives us of the fruits of our best years.

AGL. I approve of the idea, and we have the material on which to make the first trial, in the two princes who have recently arrived. They are charming, sister; and altogether their appearance has . . . Have you noticed them?

CYD. Ah! sister, they have both an air which my heart. . . . They are two perfect princes.

AGL. I think that one might try to win their affection without having need to be ashamed.

CYD. I think that a fair princess might, without shame, yield them her heart.

AGL. Here they are both, and I admire their air and their appearance.

CYD. They in no way belie what we have just said.

SCENE II.—CLEOMENES, AGENOR, AGLAURA, CYDIPPE.

AGL. Whence comes it, princes, whence comes it, that you run away thus? Have you taken fright in seeing us appear?

CLE. We were given to understand, Madam, that the princess Psyche might be here.

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<sup>1</sup> This speech of Aglaura, says Petitot, one of the commentators of Molière, is a proof that the manners of the age had, perhaps, undergone a great change since the first representation of *The Pretentious Young Ladies* (1659).



AGL. Have these spots no attraction for you, unless you see them adorned by her presence?

AG. These spots may have many sweet charms; but we are impatiently seeking Psyche.

CYD. Something very pressing, no doubt, must make you both so anxiously seek for her?

CLE. The motive is sufficiently powerful, since, in one word, our whole happiness depends upon it.

AGL. It would be too much for us to inquire into the secret which these words may conceal.

CLE. We do not pretend to make a mystery of it: in spite of us, it would soon be revealed; and when a secret is connected with love, it does not last long, Madam.

CYD. Without going any farther, princes, this means, that you both love Psyche?

AG. Both subject to her sway, we are going, in concert, to declare our passion to her.

AGL. It is a novelty, no doubt, sufficiently strange, to find two rivals so closely united.

CLE. It is true that the thing is rare, but not altogether impossible to two trusty friends.

CYD. Is there no fair one except her in these spots, and can you not divide your affections?

AGL. Among those of noble blood have you seen none but her, who might be deserving of your passion?

CLE. Does one argue at the moment one becomes smitten? Do we choose those whom we would love? And do we look what right the one to whom we give all our soul has to charm us?

AG. Without the power to select, one follows, in such an ardour, something which attracts us; and when love touches a heart, there are no reasons to give.

AGL. In truth, I pity the sad confusion into which I see that your hearts are rushing. You love one whose provoking charms will mix some grief with the hope which they excite in you; and her heart will not perform all that her eyes may promise you.

CYD. The hope which now calls you into the ranks of her lovers will find some disappointment in the gentleness which she displays; and the sudden changes of her unequal temper are calculated to bring some very sad moments.

AGL. A clear discernment of your worth makes us pity the fate to which this passion leads you; and you might both find, if you wished it, a more stable heart, with as many attractions.

CYD. By a choice much sweeter by half, you might save your friendship from the clutches of love; and such rare merit is found in you, that a tender counsel would fain prevent, out of pity, what your heart prepares for itself.

CLE. This generous advice shows a kindness for us which touches our hearts. But Heaven, Madam, has reduced us to the misfortune of not being able to profit by it.

AG. Your distinguished pity tries in vain to divert us from a passion of which we both fear the effect; but what our friendship has been unable to accomplish, Madam, nothing can accomplish it.

CYD. The power of Psyche must be . . . Here she comes.

SCENE III.—PSYCHE, CYDIPPE, AGLAURA, CLEOMENES, AGENOR.

CYD. Come, sister, to enjoy what is being prepared for you.

AGL. Let your charms hold themselves in readiness to receive here the new triumph of an illustrious conquest.

CYD. These princes have both so thoroughly felt your darts, that their lips are ready to acquaint you with it.

PS. I did not think myself the cause of their stay amongst us; and I should have believed quite another thing in seeing them speak to you.

AGL. Having neither beauty nor birth to deserve their affection and attention, they have at least favoured us with the honour of their confidence.

CLE. (*To Psyche*). The confession we are about to make, Madam, to your divine charms is, no doubt, a rash avowal; but so many hearts, near death, are obliged, by similar declarations, to incur your displeasure, that you are compelled not to punish them with the bolts of your anger. You behold in us two friends, which a sweet sympathy of disposition has united from infancy; and these

tender bonds have been more closely tightened by a hundred rivalries of esteem and gratitude. The rigorous assaults of hostile fate, the contempt for death, and the sight of tortures, have, by the distinguished instances of reciprocal services, consolidated the splendid ties of our friendship. But, whatever trials it may have undergone, its greatest triumph is in this day ; and nothing could more plainly show its proved constancy, than to see it preserved in the midst of love. Yes, notwithstanding so many charms, its signal constancy has submitted all our desires to the laws which it imposes upon us ; and now it comes, with a gentle and complete deference, to refer the success of our passion to your choice ; and, to give a greater weight to our rivalry, which, for reasons of state, might make the scale incline to the choice of one of us, this same friendship offers, without any repugnance, to unite our two states with the fate of the most fortunate one.

AG. Yes, of these two states, Madam, which we offer to unite according to your choice, we wish to make a support to our love in order to obtain you. That, for this happiness, we should both sacrifice ourselves with the king, your father, has nothing difficult for our amorous hearts ; and it is simply making a necessary gift to the most fortunate one, of a power for which the unhappy one, Madam, will no longer have any use.

PS. The choice which you offer me, princes, is sufficient to satisfy the desires of the proudest heart ; and you both adorn it in such a manner, that nothing more precious could be offered. Your love, your friendship, your supreme virtue, everything enhances with me the offer of your heart ; and I see a merit in it, which itself opposes what you wish of me. It is not to my own heart that I must defer, to enter into such bond ; my hand, for its bestowal, awaits the commands of a father, and my sisters have claims which go before mine. But, if I were left to my own absolute desires, you might both at the same time have too great a share in them ; and the whole of my esteem, balanced between you, could not determine upon selecting either of you. I could well enough respond to the ardour of your suit by my gentlest affection ; but,

amid so much merit, two hearts are too much for me alone, one heart between you two is not enough. I should be embarrassed in my fondest wishes by the sacrifice which your friendship makes; and by seeing with too much pity the fate to which the other was drifting. Yes, princes, of all those whose love has followed your example, I should eagerly prefer you both; but I should never have the heart to be able to prefer one of you to the other. My tenderness would make too great a sacrifice to him whom I should choose; and in the wrong I should do the other, I would impute to myself the most barbarous injustice. Yes, you have both shown too much grandeur of soul to make one of you unhappy; and you ought to seek in an amorous flame the means of being both happy. If your hearts consider me sufficiently worthy to allow me to dispose of you, I have two sisters capable of pleasing, who could well make your lot sufficiently happy; and friendship renders their persons sufficiently dear to me to wish you their husbands.

CLE. Can a heart whose love is so extreme, alas! consent to be given away by her whom it loves? We concede to your divine charms, Madam, a supreme power over our hearts; dispose of them even for death; but have the goodness not to dispose of them for any one else but for yourself.

AG. It would be too great an outrage on the princesses, Madam; and the remains of another flame are an unworthy portion for their charms. It requires the constant purity of a first love to aspire to that honour to which your goodness invites us. Each one of them deserves a heart that has not sighed except for her.

AGL. It seems to me, without wishing to be angry, that before defending yourselves from this proposal, princes, you ought to have waited until people had explained themselves about you. Think you that we have so easy and tender a heart? And when there is question of giving you to us, do you know whether we are willing to take you?<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Compare Arsinoë's remarks in *The Misanthrope*, Act v., Scene 6, (see Vol. II.); and also those of Armande in *The Blue Stockings*, Act i., Scene 2.

CYD. I think that we have sufficiently lofty sentiments to refuse a heart which has to be solicited ; and that we wish to owe the conquest of our lovers solely to our own merits.

PS. I thought, sisters, that it would have been a sufficiently great glory for you, if the possession of so much merit . . .

SCENE IV.—PYSCHÉ, AGLAURA, CYDIPPE, CLEOMENES,  
AGENOR, LYCAS.

LY. (*To Psyche*). Ah ! Madam !

PS. What is the matter ?

LY. The king . . .

PS. Well ?

LY. Requires your presence.

PS. What am I to expect from this great trouble ?

LY. You shall know it but too soon.

PS. Alas ! you cause me to fear for the king !

LY. Fear only for yourself ; it is you who are to be pitied.

PS. Praise be to Heaven ; thus vanishes my fright to know that I have to fear but for myself. But tell me, Lycas, the reason of your emotion.

LY. Allow me to obey him who sends me here, Madam ; it is better that you should learn from his lips that which grieves me so much.

PS. Well, let us go and learn in what they fear my feebleness so much.

SCENE V.—AGLAURA, CYDIPPE, LYCAS.

AGL. If your order does not extend to us, tell us what great misfortune your grief hides from us.

LY. Alas ! this great misfortune, already bruited about the court, behold it yourself, princess, in the oracle which the fates have rendered to the king. These are the very words, Madam, which grief has engraved on my heart :<sup>9</sup>  
“ Let there be no thought of wishing to conclude the

<sup>9</sup> This oracle is taken from Apuleius, and has a double meaning, because all that is said about the monster may be emphatically applied to Cupid.

which we behold you to pay to nature, my lord, does too much injury to the rank which you hold; and I must therefore decline to accept its touching favours. Let your grief take less empire over your wisdom; and cease to honour my fate with tears, which, coming from the heart of a king, show weakness.

KING. Ah! daughter! let my eyes indulge in tears. My mourning is reasonable even if it be extreme; and when one is about to lose for ever what I am losing, wisdom itself, believe me, may weep. In vain the pride inseparable from the diadem enjoins us to be insensible to these cruel reverses; in vain reason comes to our aid to command us to behold with dry eyes the death of those whom we love; the effort to do so is barbarous in the sight of the world, and is rather accounted brutality than supreme virtue. I will not, in this adversity, encase my heart with insensibility, and hide the grief that moves me. I renounce the vanity of this fierce harshness, which is called firmness; and by whatever name is designated this poignant grief of which I feel the smart, I will display it, daughter, to the eyes of all, and show in the heart of a king that of a man.

Ps. I do not deserve this great grief. Oppose, oppose some resistance to the rights which it usurps in your heart, of which a thousand events have shown the power. What! are you to renounce for my sake, my lord, this royal constancy, of which you have shown such famous proofs, under the strokes of misfortune!

KING. Constancy is easy in a thousand cases. All the revolutions to which inhuman fate may expose us; the loss of greatness, persecutions, poisonous envy, and the darts of hatred, having nothing which, if needs must, the resolves of a mind in which reason holds a somewhat sovereign sway, may not brave. But what makes our hearts succumb beneath some rigors, and the burden of bitter grief, are the harsh blows of those cruel destinies, which rob us for ever of those who are dear to us. Against such strokes, reason offers no available arms; and these are the bolts most to be feared, which the angry gods can launch at us.

Ps. My lord, a consolation still remains to you. Your

marriage has received more than one gift from the gods ; and, by a plainly shown favour, they deprive you of nothing, by taking me away from you, but what they have taken care to make good. There still remains to you wherewith to assuage your grief. This decree of Heaven, which you call cruel, leaves still to a father's affection the two princesses, my sisters, on whom to lavish all its sweets.

KING. Ah ! faint relief to my ills ! Nothing, nothing offers itself to me which consoles me for your loss. My eyes see only my misfortunes ; and in a fate so dire, I look but to what I lose, and see not what remains to me.

PS. Better still than I, you know, my lord, that to the will of the gods we must submit our own ; and in this sad farewell I can but say to you, what you could so much better say to others. These gods are sovereign masters of the gifts which they deign to bestow upon us ; and leave them in our hands only as long as it pleases them. When they take them back again, we have no right to murmur at the favours which their hands will no longer bestow upon us. My lord, I am a gift which they granted to your affection ; and, when by this decree, they wish to take me back again, they deprive you of nothing but what you hold of them ; and you ought to yield me without a murmur.

KING. Ah ! seek a better foundation for the consolations which your heart offers to me ; and do not make a weapon of the fallacy of this argument, to overwhelm altogether this poignant grief, of which I suffer the torments. Think you in this to give me a powerful reason not to complain of the decree of Heaven ? And cannot you perceive a destroying sternness in the proceedings of the gods, with which you wish me to be satisfied ? Behold the condition in which these gods force me to yield you up, and then look at the one in which my wretched heart received you ; by this you will know that they are about to take from me much more than what they gave me. I received from them in you, daughter, a gift which my heart did not ask from them ; I found little attraction enough in it then, and saw them, without joy, increase my family. But my heart, as well as my eyes, have made a sweet habit of this gift ;

it has taken me fifteen years of cares, of watching, and of study to render it precious to me; I have clothed it with the amiable riches of a thousand brilliant virtues; and, by assiduous cares, I have instilled into it the most beautiful treasures which wisdom could furnish; I have attached to it all my soul's tenderness; I have made it the charm and the joy of my heart, the consolation of my wearied senses, the sweet hope of my old age. They take all this from me, these gods! And you wish me to have no cause of complaint about this horrible decree of which I suffer the blow! Ah! their power plays too rigorously with the tenderness of our hearts. To take away their gift, did they need to wait until I had made it my all-in-all? Or rather, if they had the design to take it back, would it not have been better never to have given me any thing?

Ps. My lord, fear the anger of these gods against whom you dare to inveigh.

KING. After this blow, what can they do to me? They have placed me in a condition no longer to fear aught.

Ps. Ah! my lord, I tremble at the crimes I cause you to commit; and I ought to hate myself . . .

KING. Let them at least allow my legitimate complaints; it is sufficient effort on my part to obey them; let it be sufficient for them that my heart yields to the barbarous respect which we must have for them, without pretending to allay the grief with which the horrible decree of so stern a fate fills me. My just despair does not know how to restrain itself. I will, I will indulge my grief for ever; I will always feel the loss which I sustain; of Heaven's sternness I will always complain; I will, unto death, incessantly bewail what the whole universe cannot make good to me.

Ps. Ah! my lord, I beseech you, spare my weakness; I have need of fortitude in the state in which I am. Do not increase the excess of my grief by the tears of your tenderness. Alone they are severe enough, and my fate and your grief are too much for my heart.

KING. Yes, I ought to spare you my inconsolable grief. Now is the fatal moment to tear myself from you; but how can I pronounce this horrible word? I must, however; Heaven makes it my law; relentless fate obliges me



to leave you in this ominous spot. Farewell; I go . . .  
Farewell.<sup>11</sup>

SCENE II.—PSYCHE, AGLAURA, CYDIPPE.

Ps. Follow the king, sisters; you will dry his tears, and assuage his grief; and you would overwhelm him with alarm if you were to expose yourselves also to my misfortunes. Preserve for him what remains. The serpent which I expect might be fatal to you, include you in my lot, and deal me a second death-blow in you. Heaven has condemned me only to its poisonous breath; nothing can succour me; and I have no need of an example to die.

AGL. Do not envy us this cruel advantage of uniting our tears with your sorrows, of mingling our sighs with your last sighs. Grant this last pledge of our tender friendship.

Ps. It is risking yourself uselessly.

CYD. It is to expect a miracle in your favour, or to accompany you as far as the mount.

Ps. What is there still to hope after such an oracle?

AGL. An oracle is never without vagueness. The more one thinks to understand it, the less one does;<sup>12</sup> and perhaps, after all, you ought to expect nought but glory and happiness from it. Suffer us, sister, to behold this mortal fear happily dispersed, by a favourable issue, or let us at least die with you, if Heaven shows itself relentless to our supplications.

Ps. Rather listen to the voice of nature, sister, which calls you near the king. You love me too much; duty murmurs at it; you know its indispensable law. A father ought to be still dearer to you than I. Become both the supports of his old age; you owe him each a son-in-law and nephews. A thousand kings vie with each other in reserving for you their tenderness; a thousand kings vie with each other in offering you their love. The oracle claims me alone; and alone also I will die, if I can, without flinching; or not have you both as witnesses of that, which in spite of myself, nature has instilled into me.

<sup>11</sup> All that follows was written by Pierre Corneille, with the exception of the first Scene of the third Act, which is by Molière.

<sup>12</sup> This sentence is from Corneille's *Horace* (iii. 3).

AGL. To share your fate, is it to worry you?

CYD. I dare say something more, sister, is it displeasing to you?

Ps. No; but in one word, it is embarrassing to me, and perhaps redoubling Heaven's anger.

AGL. You will it so, and we depart. May this same Heaven, more just and less severe, vouchsafe you the lot which we wish you, and which our sincere affection hopes for you in spite of the oracle, and notwithstanding yourself.

Ps. Farewell. This hope, sister, and these wishes, none of the gods shall ever fulfil.

SCENE III.—PSYCHE, *alone*.

At last, alone and left to myself, I can face the hideous change, which from the height of my extreme glory, precipitates me down to the tomb. This glory was unparalleled; its fame spread from one pole to another; every king seemed born to love me; all their subjects, taking me for their goddess, began to accustom me to the incense which they unceasingly offered to me; their sighs pursued me everywhere, at no cost of mine; my soul remained free while captivating many; and I, amidst so many vows, was queen of every heart, and mistress of mine own. O Heaven! have you imputed this insensibility as a crime to me? Do you display so much severity to me, for having rendered to their love nothing but esteem? If you imposed this law upon me to make a choice in order not to displease you, since I could not do so, why did you not do so for me? Why did you not inspire me with that which, in so many others, is inspired by merit, love, and . . . But what do I behold here .

SCENE IV.—CLEOMENES, AGENOR, PSYCHE.

CLE. Two friends, two rivals, whose only care is to expose their lives to save yours.

Ps. Can I listen to you, when I have driven two sisters hence? Think you, princes, to defend me against Heaven? To give yourselves up to the serpent which I must here await, this is a despair which ill becomes great

hearts ; and to die because I die, is to overwhelm a loving soul which has but too many griefs.

AG. A serpent is not invincible ; Cadmus, who loved nothing, vanquished the one which Mars sent ; we love, and Cupid knows how to make everything possible to the heart that follows his standards, to the hand of which he himself guides all the darts.

PS. Would you have him serve you in favour of an ungrateful being whom all his arrows have not been able to touch ; to forego his revenge at the moment of its bursting forth, and help you to shield me from it ? Even if you shall have served me, when you have given me back my life, what recompense do you expect of one who cannot love ?

CLE. It is not with the hope of so charming a reward that we feel ourselves animated ; we seek but to satisfy the dictates of an affection which dares not presume that, whatever it may do, it can be capable of pleasing you, and worthy of inflaming you. Live, fair princess, and live for another ; we shall behold this with a jealous eye, we shall die of it, but of a death more sweet than if we had to see yours ; and, if we should not die in saving your life, whatever love you may prefer in our sight to ours, we would indeed die of grief and love.

PS. Live, princes, live, and think no longer to avert my fate or to share its decree. I believe I have told you, Heaven wants me only ; Heaven has condemned me only. I fancy I can hear already the destroying hisses of its minister that draws near ; my terror depicts and shows him to me at every moment ; and overmastered, as it has, all my feelings, it figures him to me on the summit of this rock. I am falling with weakness, and my dejected heart sustains with difficulty a last remnant of courage. Farewell, princes ; fly, that it may not poison you.

AG. Nothing has as yet shown itself to your eyes that surprises them ; and when you imagine your end so near, if your strength leaves you, we both have hearts and arms which hope has not abandoned. A rival may perhaps have dictated this oracle ; gold may have influenced the one who rendered it. It would not be a miracle if a

human being had answered for a speechless god ; and, in every country we have but too many examples that there are, as elsewhere, wicked men in the temples.

CLE. Let us oppose, to the base ravisher to whom sacrilege delivers you unworthily, a love which Heaven has chosen as the champion of the only fair one for whom we desire to live. If we dare not presume to possess her, permit us, in her danger, at least to follow the dictates of our ardour and the duty of our passion.

Ps. Carry them to my other self,<sup>13</sup> princes, carry them to my sisters, these duties, these extreme devotions with which your hearts are filled for me ; live for them, while I die ; bewail the dire rigour of my fate, without giving it new causes of grief in your behaviour. These are my last wishes ; and the commands of the dying have been, at all times, accepted as sovereign laws.

CLE. Princess . . .

Ps. Once more, princes, live for them. As long as you love me, you should obey. Do not reduce me to wishing to hate you, and to look upon you as rebels, through your very faithfulness to me. Go, leave me to die alone in this spot, where I find no longer a voice, except to bid you farewell ! But I feel that I am being lifted up, and the air opens a way for me, whence you shall no longer hear this dying voice. Farewell, princes ; farewell for the last time. See whether you can any longer entertain a doubt about my fate. (*Psche is lifted up into the air by two Zephyrs.*)

AG. We are losing sight of her. Let us both go to seek on the height of this rock, the means, princes, of following her.

CLE. Let us go and seek the means of not surviving her.

#### SCENE V.—CUPID, *in the air*.<sup>14</sup>

Go and die, rivals of a jealous god, whose anger you deserve for having had your hearts alive to the same charms. And you, Vulcan, cast a thousand brilliant orna-

<sup>13</sup> The original has *d'autres moi-mêmes*.

<sup>14</sup> This Cupid was probably played by a son of the actor La Thorillière. (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.) In the following acts, Baron played this part.

ments wherewith to adorn a palace, in which Cupid shall dry Psyche's tears, and surrender his arms to her.

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SECOND INTERLUDE.

*The scene is changed to a magnificent court, adorned with columns of lapis lazuli, and enriched by golden figures, forming a gorgeous and dazzling palace which Cupid has prepared for Psyche. Six Cyclops, with four Fairies, perform an entry of a ballet, in which, keeping time to music, they finish four large silver vases, which the Fairies have brought. This entry is interrupted by the recital of Vulcan, which he repeats twice.*

*First Couplet.*

Make haste, prepare these spots for the most amiable of gods; let every one be interested for him; forget nothing of what is wanted. When Cupid presses, one cannot be too quick.

Cupid does not like postponing; work, make haste, strike; increase your blows: let the desire of pleasing him make your labours of the sweetest.

*Second Couplet.*

Serve him well, this charming god; he is pleased with great attention. Let every one be interested in him; forget nothing of what is wanted. When Cupid presses, one cannot be too quick.

Cupid does not like postponing; work, make haste, strike; increase your blows. Let the desire of pleasing him make your labours of the sweetest.

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ACT III.

SCENE I.—CUPID,<sup>15</sup> ZEPHYR.

ZE. Yes, I think I have acquitted myself very gallantly of the commission which you have given me. From the

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<sup>15</sup> It is most likely that Baron played Cupid in this and the following acts, otherwise the remarks of Zephyr about the great change in the appearance of Love would be out of place.

summit of the rock, I have brought this beauty, gently through mid-air, into this fair enchanted palace, where, in full liberty, you can dispose of her fate. But you surprise me, by the great change which you have made in your appearance; this figure, these features, and this dress, altogether conceal who you are; and I give it to the sharpest to recognize Cupid in you this day.

CUP. Neither do I wish to be known; my heart only I wish to reveal to Psyche, nothing but the beautiful transports of this ardent passion with which her sweet charms have inspired it; and, to express their amorous languor, and to conceal who I may be from the eyes of her who commands me, I have taken the form which you now behold.

ZE. You are a great master in everything; it is by this that I recognize it. Beneath disguises of various natures, we have seen the love-sick gods endeavour to relieve the sweet wound which hearts receive from your fiery arrows; but you have the superiority over them in good sense; and this is just the very figure to command a happy success with the amiable sex, to whom we offer up our devotions. Yes, the assistance derived from the shape is very great; and, apart from all rank or wit, whosoever finds the means of making such an appearance never sighs in vain.

CUP. I have resolved, dear Zephyr, always to remain thus; and no one will find anything to gainsay in that, to the eldest of all the love gods. It is time to leave off this long infancy which tries my patience; it is time that henceforth I should become grown-up.

ZE. Very good. You cannot do better; the more so as you are entering upon an adventure which has nothing childish in it.

CUP. This change will, no doubt, vex my mother.

ZE. I anticipate some little anger at this. Although disputes about age should have no place among immortals, your mother, Venus, has in this the temper, of all fair ones, who do not like grown-up children.<sup>16</sup> But where I

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<sup>16</sup> Apuleius makes Venus say, "Ought I not to be very happy to be called a grandmother in the flower of my age?"

think her most offended, is in the proceeding you are engaged in ; and it is avenging her strangely to love the fair one whom she wished to punish ! This hatred, to which it was her desire that the power of a son, whom even the gods fear, should lend itself . . .

CUP. Let us leave this, Zephyr, and tell me if you do not think Psyche the fairest maid in the world ? Is there aught on earth, is there aught in the Heavens, that could dispute with her the glorious title of beauty without a rival ? But I see her, dear Zephyr, standing astonished at the splendour of this spot.

ZE. You can show yourself, to finish her martyrdom, to disclose to her her glorious destiny, and to tell each other, between yourselves, all that sighs, lips, and eyes can convey. As a discreet confidant, I know what I have to do to interrupt an amorous interview.<sup>17</sup>

SCENE II.—PSYCHE, *alone*.

Where am I ? and in a spot which I imagined desolate ; what skilful hand has built this palace, which art and nature have adorned with the rarest collection that the eyes may for ever go on admiring ? Everything smiles, shines, and dazzles in these gardens, in these rooms, the splendid belongings of which contain nought but what enchants and pleases ; and in which, wherever my affrighted looks turn, I behold nought but gold and flowers 'neath my steps. Can Heaven have made this pile of marvels for the abode of a serpent ? And when, by their sight, it amuses and suspends the matchless cruelty of my relentless fate, does it wish to show its repentance thereat ? No, no ; it is the blackest, the severest stroke of its hatred, so fruitful in cruelties, which, by a sternness fresh and without parallel, displays the choice it has made, of everything the most beautiful on earth, only for me to leave it with the greater regret. How ridiculous is my expectation,<sup>18</sup> if 'by this it thinks to assuage my grief ! Each moment that my death is postponed is a fresh misfortune ; the longer it

<sup>17</sup> Molière wrote this Act himself.

<sup>18</sup> What can Psyche's expectation be, unless, as Moland suggests, that she, after having upbraided Heaven with its cruelty, hopes for some alleviation of her lot, some repentance of stern Fate.

delays, the oftener I die. Do not make me languish any longer ; come to take your victim, your monster, who are to tear me asunder ! Am I to seek you, and am I to stimulate your fury to devour me ? If Heaven will my death, if my life be a crime, then dare, in short, to seize upon the little life which remains to me. I am weary of murmuring against a legitimate punishment ; I am weary of sighing ; come, so that I may finish, and die.

SCENE III.—CUPID, PSYCHE, ZEPHYR.

CUP. Behold him, this serpent, this pitiless monster, which a wondrous oracle has prepared for you, and who may, perhaps, not be so horrible as you imagined him to yourself.<sup>19</sup>

PS. You, my lord, can you be this monster with whom the oracle has threatened my sad days ; you, who rather seem a god who, by a miracle, has vouchsafed to come to my aid !

CUP. What need of aid in the midst of an empire in which everything that breathes awaits but your glances to submit to their laws, where you have to fear no other monster but me ?

PS. How little fear a monster like you inspires ! And if there be any poison, how little occasion one would have to venture upon the least complaint against a favourable attack of which every heart would fear the cure ! Scarce do I behold you, but my terrors cease, and let the image of my death vanish into air ; and I feel rushing through my chilled veins an indefinable fire which I knew not before. I have felt esteem and good-will, friendship, gratitude ; innocent sorrows have caused me to feel the power of compassion : but I have never felt yet what I feel now. I know not what it is ; but I know that it delights me ; that I conceive not the slightest alarm at it. The more I fix my eyes on you, the more I feel myself charmed. All which I felt before did not

<sup>19</sup> As we have seen in the Introductory Notice to this play, Cupid is invisible to Psyche in Apuleius' tale ; Molière represents him as a young, handsome mortal, having left behind him his wings, his bow and arrows, his torch, and all his god-like attributes.



produce the same effect ; and if I knew what it is to love, my lord, I would tell you that I love you. Do not turn from me those eyes which poison me, those tender, piercing, but yet amorous eyes, which seem to share in the emotion which they evoke. Alas ! the more dangerous they are, the more pleased am I to gaze upon them. By what command of Heaven, which I cannot understand, do I say to you more than I ought ; I, whose modesty might at least have waited until you explained to me the trouble in which I see you ? You sigh, my lord, as I sigh ; your senses appear stunned as well as mine. It is for me to keep silence, for you to tell me so ; and yet it is I who say it.<sup>20</sup>

CUP. You always had so hard a heart, Psyche, that you must not be surprised if, to repair the injury, Love, at this moment, repays himself with usury for what ought to have been given to him. The moment has come when your lips must breathe sighs so long repressed ; when, tearing you away from this sullen humour, a multitude of transports, as sweet as they are unknown, come all together to touch your heart, as intensely as they ought to have done during the many fine days of which this unfeeling soul has profaned the flight.

PS. Is it then so great a crime not to love ?

CUP. Do not you suffer a great punishment from it ?

PS. It is punishing sweetly enough.

CUP. It is choosing its legitimate penalty, and, on this glorious day, is rendering itself justice for a want of love, by an excess of love.

PS. Why have I not been punished sooner ? I place all the happiness of my life in it. I ought to blush at it, or say it more softly ; but the punishment has too many

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<sup>20</sup> Tradition states that these beautiful lines, in which the passion of love is so well described, were written by Corneille, then sixty-five years old, and at that time enamoured of Madame Molière, who represented Psyche. It further mentions that, a year later, he paid her fresh homage in putting some lines, about the power that Cupid possesses in the hearts of old men, into the mouth of Martian, in the tragedy of *Pulcheria*. It is difficult to say at the present time if Corneille was ever in love with Molière's wife ; but *Pulcheria* was acted, not at the Palais-Royal, but at the Theatre du Marais, and the part of the heroine was played by Made-moiselle Dupin.

charms. Allow me that, aloud, I say it and re-say it ; I would say it a hundred times, and not blush at it. It is not I who speak ; and the astonishing empire, the gentle violence of your presence, take possession of my voice the moment I wish to speak. In vain my modesty is secretly offended by it, in vain my sex and propriety dare prescribe me other laws ; your eyes themselves choose my answer for me, and my lips, enslaved by their mighty power, consult me no longer about what I owe to myself.

CUP. You may believe, fair Psyche, you may believe what they tell you, these eyes which have no jealousy ; let yours vie with them in informing me of all that passes within you. You may believe in this heart which sighs, and which, as long as yours will respond to it, will tell you more in one sigh than a hundred looks could tell. It is the sweetest, the strongest, and the surest language of all.

PS. The understanding was due to our hearts to make them equally satisfied. I have sighed, you have understood me ; you sigh, I understand you. But leave me no longer in doubt, my lord, and tell me, if, by the same route, Zephyr has conducted you hither after me, to tell me what I am now listening to. When I arrived, were you expected ? And when you speak to him, are you obeyed ?

CUP. In these sweet regions I bear sovereign sway, as you bear it over my heart ; Cupid protects me ; and it is for his sake that Eolus has placed Zephyr at my disposal. It is Cupid himself who, to see my devotions rewarded, has dictated this oracle, which, by threatening your charming existence, has rid you of a crowd of lovers, and delivered of the eternal obstacle of so many eager sighs, which were not worthy of being addressed to you. Do not ask me which is this province, nor the name of its prince : you shall know it when the time comes. I wish to win you ; but it is by my attentions, by assiduous care and constant devotion, by the amorous sacrifices of all that I am, of all that I can do, without the dazzle of my rank pleading for me, without making a merit of my power ; and, although I am sovereign in this happy spot, I will not owe you, Psyche, to anything but my love.

Come, and admire its wonders, princess, and prepare your eyes and your ears for its delights. In it you shall behold woods and meadows contend by their charms with gold and precious stones; you shall hear nothing but sweet concerts; a hundred fair ones shall attend on you, who shall adore without envying, and shall sue at every moment, with subjected and delighted souls, for the honour of your commands.

Ps. My will does but wait upon yours. I could not have any other; but, after all, your oracle separates me from two sisters and the king, my father, whom my imaginary death reduces, all three, to bewail me. To dissipate the error by which their bowed-down hearts find themselves filled with mortal grief, suffer my sisters to be witnesses of my glory and of your devotions. Lend them, as you have done to me, the wings of Zephyr, which may facilitate, as they have done to me, access to your empire. Show them in what spot I breathe; make them admire the success of my loss.

CUP. You do not yield all your heart up to me, Psyche; this tender recollection of a father and two sisters robs me in part of the sweets which I claim all in all for my passion. Have no eyes but for me, who have none but for you; think of nought but of loving me, think of nought but of pleasing me; and, when such cares venture to distract you . . .

Ps. Can one be jealous of the affections of relatives?

CUP. I am so, my Psyche; I am so of all nature. The sun's rays kiss you too frequently; your tresses have too much of the dallings of the wind; the moment it toys with them, I murmur at it. Even the air which you breathe with too much pleasure passes between your lips: Your dress encircles you too closely; and when you sigh, I know not what makes me uneasy and fear, amongst your sighs, some errant ones. But you wish for your sisters; go, depart, Zephyr; Psyche wills it, I cannot refuse it.<sup>21</sup>

SCENE IV.—CUPID, PSYCHE.

CUP. When you shall show them this happy dwelling,

<sup>21</sup> This passages is imitated from Théophile de Vau's tragedy of *Pyramus and Thisbe* (Act iv., Scene 1), played in 1621.

make them a hundred gifts from among these treasures. Lavish caresses upon caresses on them; and exhaust the tenderness of relationship if you can, to abandon yourself afterwards entirely to my love. I shall not intrude my unwelcome presence. But do not give them too long interviews: whatever amiability you have for them must be robbed from mine.

PS. Your love grants me a grace which I shall never abuse.

CUP. Let us, meanwhile, go and see these gardens, this palace, in which you shall see nothing but what will pale before your own brilliancy. And you, little Loves, and you, young Zephyrs, who have no souls<sup>22</sup> but tender sighs, now vie with each other in showing what you feel in beholding my princess.

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### THIRD INTERLUDE.

*An entry of the ballet of four Cupids, and four Zephyrs, twice interrupted by a dialogue, sung by a Cupid and a Zephyr.*

#### CUPID, PSYCHE.

ZE. Amiable youth, follow tenderness; join to fine days the sweets of love. It is to surprise you, that they tell you, that you should avoid their sighs, and fear their desires. Allow them to teach you what their pleasures are.

TOGETHER. Everyone is bound to love in his turn; and the more charms one possesses, the more one owes to Love.

ZE. A young and tender heart is made to surrender; it will not avail to turn away from it.

TOGETHER. Every one is bound to love in his turn;

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<sup>22</sup> Here presents itself a trifling difficulty in the translation. The original copy of *Psyche*, which I have consulted, has *ames*, souls, without the circumflex accent; so has Lemerre, in the faithful reprint of the first edition of Molière's plays; Moland has *âmes*. But Taschereau and Louandre, in their editions of our author, have *armes*, arms, which seems to me to make better sense. However, I have followed the original copy.

and the more charms one possesses, the more one owes to Love.

CUP. Why defend one's self? What boots it to delay? One day lost, is lost without retrieve.

TOGETHER. Every one is bound to love in his turn; and the more charms one possesses, the more one owes to Love.

SECOND VERSE.

ZE. Love has his charms. Let us yield him our arms. His cares and his tears are not without sweets. To follow him, a heart abandons itself to a hundred ills. To taste his pleasures, one must suffer almost death. But not to love, is not to live.

TOGETHER. If love entails so many cares and griefs, one happy moment repays a thousand ills.

ZE. There is fear, there is hope; there is mystery needed; but nothing good is ever obtained without trouble.

TOGETHER. If love entails so many cares and griefs, one happy moment repays a thousand ills.

CUP. What can be better than to love and to please? It is a charming care, a lover's task.

TOGETHER. If love entails so many cares and griefs, one happy moment repays a thousand ills.

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ACT IV.

*The scene changes to another magnificent palace, intersected at the back by a vestibule, across which is seen a charming and magnificent garden, decorated with several vases, with orange and other trees, laden with all kinds of fruits.*

SCENE I—AGLAURA,<sup>22</sup> CYDIPPE.

AGL. It is incredible, sister, I have beheld too many marvels; futurity will have a great difficulty in conceiving them; the sun who sees all, and who shows us all, has never seen the like. They vex my mind; this bril-

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<sup>22</sup> Aglaura's speech is imitated from Apuleius.

liant palace, this pompous train, are so much odious display, which fills me with shame as much as with vexation. How niggardly Fortune treats us, and how blindly, in her indiscreet prodigality, she lavishes, nay, exhausts, combines all her efforts to heap together so many treasures for the share of a younger sister!

CYD. I enter into all your feelings; I have similar vexations; and everything that displeases you in this charming spot wounds me also; all that you take as a mortal insult overwhelms me, as it does you, and leaves me with bitterness in the heart and a blush on the brow.

AGL. No, sister, there are no queens who, in their own state, speak as sovereigns, as Psyche speaks in these regions; with promptitude she is obeyed, and an amorous studiousness fathoms her desires from her very eyes. A thousand fair ones press around her, and to our jealous glances seem to say: Whatever our attractions may be, she is still more beautiful, and we who serve her, are yet more fair than you. She pronounces, they execute; no one gainsays, no one cavils. Flora, who attends her every step, strews with lavish hands around her her sweetest gifts. Zephyr flies at the commands which she gives; and his mistress and he, enchanted by her charms, forget to love each other in their eagerness to wait upon her.

CYD. She has gods in her service; soon she will have altars; and we command but paltry mortals, whose audacity and caprice, revolting secretly each moment against us, oppose murmurs or artifice to our desires.

AGL. It was little that at our court all hearts, vieing with each other, would have preferred her to us; it was not enough that, night and day, she should be idolized there by a host of lovers; when we were consoling ourselves to see her in her grave by the unforeseen decree of the oracle, she wishes to display the miracle of her fresh destiny to our very face, and to choose our eyes to witness that which we desire the least.<sup>24</sup>

CYD. What vexes me most, is this lover so perfect and so worthy to please, who is captive beneath her sway. If we could choose amongst all the monarchs, is there one,

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<sup>24</sup> This, again, is taken from Apuleius.

from among so many kings, who bears such marks of nobleness? To find one's self favoured beyond one's wishes, is often nothing but a happiness which makes one wretched; there are no pompous trains nor superb palaces but what leave some door open to incurable evils, but to have a lover of consummate worth, and to see one's self dearly beloved by him, is a happiness so great, so elevated, that its grandeur cannot be expressed.

AGL. Let us speak no longer of it, sister, we should die with vexation. Let us rather think about revenge, and let us find the means of breaking this adorable understanding between him and her. Here she comes. I have some blows ready to strike her with, which she will with difficulty avoid.

SCENE II.—PSYCHE, AGLAURA, CYDIPPE.

Ps. I have come to say farewell to you; my lover sends you back, and is no longer able to endure that you should debar him for one moment from the joy which he takes in seeing himself the only one to attend upon me. In a simple glance, in the least word, his love finds charms of which I am robbing him, in favour of my own blood, in bestowing them on my sisters.

AGL. The jealousy is sufficiently fine drawn; and these delicate feelings well deserve the idea that he who has so much warmth for you, surpasses the ordinary run of lovers. I speak to you thus, for want of knowing him. You do not know his name, nor those who gave him birth: our minds are alarmed at it. I hold him to be a great prince, and of a supreme power, far above that of the diadem; his treasures, lavishly strewn beneath your steps, are such as to make abundance itself ashamed; you love him as much as he loves you; he charms you, and you charm him; your happiness would be extreme, sister, if you knew whom you loved.

Ps. What does it matter to me? I am beloved by him. The more he sees me, the more I please him. There are no pleasures that could delight the heart but what anticipate my wishes; and I do not see how yours need be alarmed, when everything serves me in this palace.

AGL. What matters it that everything serves you here,

if this lover for ever conceals from you who he is? We are alarmed only in your interest. In vain everything smiles upon you, in vain everything pleases you here, true love conceals nothing; and he who persists in hiding himself feels something within with which he might be reproached. If this lover should become fickle, for often in love variety is sufficiently sweet; and I make bold to say it between ourselves, for great as is the brilliancy with which these features shine, there may be others elsewhere as beautiful as you; if, I say another object should draw him beneath another sway; if, in the position I see you, alone in his hands, and defenceless, he resorts to violence, on whom is the king to avenge you for this change, or for this insolence?

Ps. Sister, you make me shudder. Just Heaven! could I be unfortunate enough . . .

Cyd. Who knows but what the bonds of Hymen may already . . .

Ps. Proceed not; it would kill me.

AGL. I have but one word more to say to you. This prince who loves you, and who commands the winds, who gives us the wings of Zephyr as a car, and with fresh pleasures loads you every moment, mixes perhaps with all his love a little of imposture, when he to your eyes breaks the order of nature; perhaps this palace is nothing but an illusion, and these gilded wainscoatings, this heap of riches, with which he buys your tenderness, may vanish in a moment, when he shall have become tired of your caresses. You know as well as we what may be done by magic.

Ps. What cruel alarms I feel in my turn!

AGL. Our friendship looks but to your good!

Ps. Farewell, sisters; let us finish the conversation. I love, and I fear that he may become impatient. Now go; and to-morrow, if I can, you shall see me more happy, or more overwhelmed by the mortal grief.

AGL. We will tell the king what fresh glory, what excess of happiness is being showered upon you.

Cyd. We will relate to him the surprising and marvellous history of so sweet a change.

Ps. Do not make him uneasy, sister, by your suspicions; and when you depict to him so charming an empire . . .



AGL. We both know well enough what to withhold or what to tell, and have no need of any lessons on that score.

*(Zephyr carries the two sisters of Psyche away in a cloud, which comes down to the earth, and in which he bears them rapidly away.)*

SCENE III.—CUPID, PSYCHE.

CUP. At last you are alone, and I can tell you again, without having your two importunate sisters for witnesses, what sway these lovely eyes have gained over me, and what excess there is in the joys inspired by sincere affection, the moment it joins two hearts. I can explain to you the love-sick ardour of my ravished soul, and swear to you that, subjected to you alone, it has no other aim in its delights than to see this ardour met by a similar ardour; to conceive no other wish than to mould my devotions to your desires, and to take all my pleasures in whatever pleases you. But how comes it that a sombre cloud seems to dim the lustre of these beautiful eyes? Is there aught you wish for in these spots? Do you disdain the homage of the devotion offered to you here?

PS. No, my lord.

CUP. What is it then? and whence comes my misfortune? I hear fewer sighs of love than of grief; I perceive the faded roses in your complexion mark a secret sorrow; hardly are your sisters gone, than you sigh with regret. Ah! Psyche, when the passion of two hearts is the same, have they different sighs? And when one loves sincerely, and beholds what one loves; can one think of relatives?

PS. It is not that which afflicts me.

CUP. Is it the absence of a rival, and of a beloved rival, which causes me to be neglected?

PS. How little have you penetrated into a heart entirely yours! I love you, my lord, and my heart is annoyed at the unworthy suspicion which you have formed. You do not know your own worth, if you fear not to be beloved. I love you; and since I first saw the light, I have shown myself proud enough to disdain the devotion of more than one king. And, if I am to open my whole heart to you,

I have found no one but you who was worthy of me. Nevertheless I have some grief which in vain I would conceal from you; a carking care mixes with all my affection, from which I cannot separate it. Do not ask me the cause: perhaps, knowing it, you would punish me for it; and if I still dare to aspire to any thing, I am at least sure not to incur it.

CUP. What! are you not afraid that I, in my turn, shall be annoyed that you so little know your worth; or do you pretend not to know how absolute your sway is over me? Ah! if you doubt it, be undeceived. Speak!

PS. I shall have the affront of seeing myself refused.

CUP. Think better of me; the trial is easy. Speak, everything holds itself in readiness for your commands. If, to believe me, you require oaths, I swear by your lovely eyes, those masters of my soul, those divine authors of my love; and if it be not enough to swear by your lovely eyes, I swear by the Styx, as the gods swear.

PS. I dare to fear a little less, after this assurance. My lord, I here behold pomp and abundance; I adore you, and you love me; my heart is delighted at it, my senses charmed by it; but, amidst this supreme happiness, I have the misfortune not to know whom I love: dissipate this ignorance, and allow me to know so perfect a lover.

CUP. Psyche, what have you said?

PS. That this is the happiness to which I aspire: and if you do not grant it to me . . .

CUP. I have sworn it, I am no longer the master of it: but you do not know what you ask. Let me keep my secret. If I make myself known, I lose you, and you lose me. The sole remedy is to retract it.

PS. Is that my sovereign sway over you?

CUP. You are all-powerful, and I am entirely yours. But if our flame seems sweet to you, do not place an obstacle to its charming continuation; do not force me to flight; that is the least misfortune that could result to us from the wish that has seduced you.

PS. My lord, you wish to test me; but I know what I ought to believe. Pray, inform me of the whole extent of my glory, and do not conceal from me for what illustrious choice I have rejected the devotion of so many kings.

CUP. Do you wish it?

Ps. Let me beseech you.

CUP. If you knew, Psyche, the cruel destiny you draw upon yourself by this . . .

Ps. You render me desperate, my lord.

CUP. Reflect well upon it; I can still keep silent.

Ps. Do you take oaths not to fulfil them?

CUP. Well then! I am the god, the most powerful of the gods, absolute on earth, absolute in the Heavens; on the waters, in the air, my power is supreme: in one word, I am Cupid himself, who with one of my own darts had wounded myself for you,<sup>25</sup> and, without the violence, alas! which you have done to me, and which has just changed my love into anger, I should have become your husband. Your wishes are satisfied, you know now whom you have loved; you know the lover whom you have charmed; behold, Psyche, what it has brought you to. You yourself force me to leave you; you yourself force me to deprive you of all the effect of your victory. Your lovely eyes may perhaps never behold me again. This palace, these gardens, disappearing with myself, will make your new-born glory vanish. You would not trust to me; and as the fruit of your cleared-up doubts, Fate, beneath whom Heaven trembles, more mighty than my love, than all the gods together, shall show you her hatred, and drives me hence.

*Cupid disappears; and at the same moment that he flies away, the magnificent garden vanishes also. Psyche remains alone in the midst of a vast plain, and on the desolate banks of a great river, in which she wishes to throw herself. The river-god appears, seated on a mass of reeds and water plants, and leaning on a large urn, from which issues a thick jet of water.*

SCENE IV.—PSYCHE, THE RIVER GOD.

Ps. Cruel destiny, dire anxiety! fatal curiosity! Hor-

<sup>25</sup> This idea is from Apuleius. The difference between the treatment of the fable of Psyche as put down by the Latin author and the French one, will be easily perceived. The opera, *Psyché*, which was given in 1678, followed the original classical idea (see Introductory Notice).

rible solitude ! what have you done with all my happiness ? I loved a god, I was adored by him ; my happiness increased at every moment, and I behold myself alone, all in tears, in the midst of a desert, where, to overwhelm me altogether, confused and despairing, I feel the love grow stronger, when I have lost the lover. The recollection of him charms and poisons me ; its sweetness tyrannizes over a wretched heart which my passion has condemned to the most poignant grief. Oh Heaven ! when Cupid abandons me, why does he leave me the love which he gave me ? Source of all good inexhaustible and pure, master of men and of gods, dear author of the ills, which I endure, are you for ever vanished from my sight ? I myself have banished you from it : in an excess of love, in an extreme happiness, my heart became disturbed by an unworthy suspicion. Ungrateful heart ! yours was a flame but badly kindled ; and one cannot wish, the moment one loves, but what the cherished object also wishes. Let me die, it is the only thing left for me to do, after the loss which I have sustained. For whom, great gods ! could I wish to live ? and for whom could I form desires ? Stream, whose waters bathe these dreary sands, bury my crime in your waves, and to put an end to evils so deplorable, let me insure my rest in your bed.

THE GOD. Your death would sully my waters,\* Psyche ; Heaven forbids it you ; and perhaps after such profound grief, another fate awaits you. Flee rather from the implacable anger of Venus : I see her coming to look for you and to punish you ; the love of the son has evoked the hatred of the mother. Fly, I shall know how to detain her.

PS. I am prepared for her avenging fury ; what could they have in store for me but what would be too sweet ? She who seeks death fears neither gods nor goddess, and may brave all their anger.

SCENE V.—VENUS, PSYCHE, THE RIVER GOD.

VEN. Proud Psyche, you dare then await me, after having usurped my honours on earth ; after your seductive

\* This idea is again borrowed from Apuleius, though the reason which the river-god gives for his refusal is different.

features have received the incense which ought to have been offered only to mine? I have seen my temples deserted, I have seen all mortals, seduced by your charms, idolize your sovereign beauty, offer you marks of respect undreamt of until then, and not at all considering that there was another Venus; and after this I see you still bold enough not to fear your just punishments, and to look me in the face, as if my resentment were but a small matter!

PS. If by some mortals I have been adored, is it a crime, in me to have had charms with which their thoughtless souls allowed their eyes to be charmed which had not beheld you? I am what Heaven has made me; I have nothing but the beauties which it has been good enough to lend me. If the devotions that were offered to me ill satisfied you, you had but to present yourself to force all hearts to carry them back to you; but to hide no longer from them this perfect beauty which, to bring them back to their duty, has but to show itself, to make itself adored.

VEN. You ought to have defended yourself better. These marks of respect, this incense ought to have been refused; and the better to undeceive them, you ought, before their very eyes, to have given them up to me. You cherished the mistake for which you ought to have had nothing but horror; you have done even more; your arrogant humour, despising a thousand kings, has, in its extravagant ambition, carried its choice as far as Heaven.

PS. I have carried my choice as far as Heaven, goddess?

VEN. Your insolence is matchless. To disdain all the kings on earth, is that not aspiring to the gods?

PS. If Cupid had hardened my heart for all of them, and reserved me entirely for himself, can I be blamed for that? and must I see you to-day wishing to overwhelm me with eternal grief as the price of so sweet a passion?

VEN. Psyche, you ought to have known better what you were, and who this god was.

PS. Has he given me the time and the opportunity, he who made himself master of my whole heart at the first moment?

VEN. Your whole heart allowed itself to be charmed by

him, and you loved him the moment he said to you I love.

PS. Could I do otherwise than love the god who inspires love, and who spoke to me for himself? He is your son: you know his power, you are acquainted with his worth.

VEN. Yes, he is my son, but a son who annoys me, a son who badly renders me what he knows to be my due; a son who causes me to be abandoned, and who the better to flatter his unworthy amours, since you love him, no longer wounds any one who comes to implore my assistance at my shrines. You have made of him a rebel against me: I will be revenged, and signally, on you; and I shall teach you whether a mortal ought to allow a god to sigh at her knees. Follow me; you shall see, to your cost, to what mad confidence in yourself this ambition carried you. Come, and prepare yourself with as much patience as you have shown presumption.

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#### FOURTH INTERLUDE.

*The scene represents the infernal regions. A sea of fire, the waves of which are in a perpetual state of agitation, is seen. This horrible sea is bordered by ruins in flames, and in the midst of the seething waves, through a frightful orifice, appears the infernal palace of Pluto. Eight furies come out of it, and form an entry of the ballet, in which they rejoice about the rage they have excited in the soul of the gentlest of all divinities. A sprite interferes with his perilous leaps in the dances, while Psyche, who has passed into the infernal regions by the orders of Venus, repasses, in the boat of Charon, with the casket which she has received from Proserpine for the goddess.<sup>27</sup>*

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<sup>27</sup> Between the fourth act and the fourth interlude, a certain time is supposed to have elapsed, during which Psyche has undergone the different trials to which Venus exposed her. She has now just acquitted herself of the last. See the Introductory Notice to this play.

## ACT V

SCENE I.—PSYCHE, *alone*.

Terrible windings of the infernal waves, black palaces, where Megæra and her sisters hold their court, eternal fires of light, amidst your Ixions, amidst your Tantaluses, amidst so many tortures, that know no intervals, are there, in your horrible dwelling, penalties equal to the labours to which Venus condemns my love? There is no satiating her; and since I have found myself subjected to her laws, since she has given me up to her resentment, I need, in these cruel moments, more than one soul, more than one life to fulfil her commands. I would suffer all with joy, if, amidst the rigours which her hatred displays, my eyes could behold again, were it but for one moment, that dear, that adorable lover. I dare not name him; my lips, too criminal by having required too much of him, have become unworthy of him; and in this cruel affliction, the most fatal suffering, with which an ever-recurring death overwhelms me at each moment, is that of not seeing him. If his anger were still to last, no misfortune would ever equal mine; but if he took pity on a heart which adores him, whatever I had to suffer would be no suffering at all. Yes, ye Fates, if his just anger were but appeased, all my misfortunes would be at an end: to render me insensible to the fury of the mother, I need but one look of the son. I will no longer doubt it, he shares my sufferings; he sees what I suffer, and he suffers with me. Whatever I endure pains him; it becomes a law of love for him. In spite of Venus, in spite of my crime, it is he who supports me, it is he who reanimates me in the midst of the perils which they make me undergo; he preserves the affection with which his passion inspires him, and takes care to endow me with new life each time I must die. But what do these two shades want with me, whom I behold advancing towards me through the bad light of these gloomy regions?

## SCENE II.—PSYCHE, CLEOMENES, AGENOR.

Ps. Cleomenes, Agenor, is it you whom I behold? Who has deprived you of life?

CLE. The most righteous grief that could have furnished us with grounds for despairing ; that funeral pomp, where you expected the utmost harshness of the most dismal fate, and the most signal injustice.

AG. On that very rock where Heaven in its anger promised you, instead of a spouse, a serpent, which should suddenly devour you, we held ourselves in readiness to repulse its rage, or to die with you. You know it, princess ; and when you disappeared in mid-air from our sight, we both, carried away by love and grief, threw ourselves from the height of that rock, to follow your charms, or rather to taste the amorous joy of offering to the monster a first prey for you.

CLE. Happily deceived in the meaning of the oracle, we have found out in this spot the miracle, and have known that the serpent ready to devour you was the god of love ; and who, though a god adoring you himself, could not endure that mortals like us should dare to adore you.

AG. As a reward for having followed you, we here taste a sufficiently pleasant death. What had we to do with life, if we could not belong to you ? We here behold again your loveliness, which neither of us would have looked upon again above. Happy if we but see the slightest of your tears honour the misfortunes which you have caused us !

PS. Can I have any tears left, when misfortune has been carried to the highest degree ? Let us unite our sighs in so dire a calamity ; sighs do not exhaust themselves ; but you princes, will sigh for an ungrateful creature. You did not wish to survive my miseries ; and whatever grief may overwhelm me, it is not for you that I die.

CLE. Did we deserve it, we, whose whole passion has but wearied you with the story of our sorrows ?

PS. You might have deserved, princes, my entire affection, had you not been rivals. Those incomparable qualities which attended the addresses of the one and the other, rendered you both too amiable for either of you to be scorned.

AG. You might, without being unjust and cruel, have refused us a heart reserved for a god. But see Venus



once more. Fate calls us back, and forces us to bid you farewell.

Ps. Does she not leave you time to tell me where, in these regions, you dwell?

CLE. In ever verdant groves, where one breathes by love, the moment one has died of love. By love one is born again there, with love one sighs there, beneath the gentlest laws of his happy sway; and eternal night dares not drive away the day, with which he himself endows the phantoms which he inspires, and of which he makes a court in the infernal regions themselves.

AG. Your envious sisters, descended after us to destroy you, have destroyed themselves; and as a reward for a suggestion which cost them their lives, each, by turns, suffers by the side of Ixion, by the side of Tityos; sometimes the wheel, and sometimes the vulture. Cupid, through the Zephyrs, took swift vengeance for their envenomed and jealous malice; these winged ministers of his righteous anger, under the pretext of conducting them once more to you, plunged them both to the bottom of a precipice,<sup>28</sup> where the horrible spectacle of their torn bodies displays but the least and first punishment for these counsels, whereof the cunning causes the ills which you suffer.

Ps. How I pity them!

CLE. You alone are to be pitied. But we have stayed too long to converse with you; farewell. May we live in your remembrance! May you soon have nothing more to fear! May Cupid transport you shortly to the Heavens, place you there by the side of the gods, and kindling a love which cannot be extinguished, emancipate for ever the lustre of your beauteous eyes to increase the light of these regions!

SCENE III.—PSYCHE, *alone*.

Unhappy lovers! Their passion still endures! Though dead, they both still adore me; me, whose severity so ill received their affections! It is not so with you; you who alone have charmed me, beloved, whom I love still a

<sup>28</sup> In Apuleius the two sisters are punished by Psyche herself; but, nothing is said about their fate in the infernal regions.

hundred times more than my life, and who break such beautiful bonds! Flee no longer from me, and permit me to hope that one day you will cast your eyes on me; that, by my sufferings I shall gain something to please you, something to recover your plighted faith. But what I have suffered has too much disfigured me to inspire me with such hopes. With eyes dejected, sad, despairing, languid, and faded, how can I prevail, if by some miracle, impossible to foresee, my beauty, which once pleased you, is not restored? I have something here to restore it: this treasure of divine beauty, which Proserpine has placed in my hands to remit to Venus, must contain some charms of which I can take possession; and the splendor of them must be extreme, since Venus, beauty herself, requires them to adorn herself. Would it be so great a crime to abstract a little from them? To make myself pleasing in the eyes of a god who made himself my lover; to regain his heart, and put an end to my torment; is not all this but too legitimate? Let me open it. What vapours dim my brain?<sup>22</sup> And what do I behold coming out of this open box? Cupid, if your pity does not oppose my destruction, I descend to the grave, never again to revive.

*(She swoons. Cupid comes down to her, flying.)*

SCENE IV.—CUPID, PSYCHE, *(in a swoon)*.

CUP. Your peril, Psyche, dispels my anger, or rather the ardour of my flame has not ceased; and though you have displeased me in the highest degree, I have only interested myself against my mother's wrath. I have seen all your labours, I have followed all your misery, my sighs have everywhere accompanied your tears. Turn your eyes towards me; I am still the same. What! I say and repeat aloud that I love you, and you do not say that you love me, Psyche! Are your lovely eyes closed for ever? Is their brightness forever gone from them? O death! could you launch so criminal a dart, and, without any respect for my eternal being, attempt my own life! How many times, ungrateful deity, have I swelled your

<sup>22</sup> This, again, is taken from Apuleius. La Fontaine, in his tale, makes come from the box a thick vapour, which makes Psyche look like an "Ethiopian woman."

gloomy empire by the contempt or cruelty of a proud or stern fair one? Even how many faithful lovers, if I must say so, have I sacrificed to you by excess of transports! Go! I will no longer wound souls, I will no longer pierce hearts but with darts dipped in the divine liquid with which immortal flames are nourished by Heaven; and I will no longer launch any except to make, before your very eyes, so many gods of so many lovers. And you, relentless mother, who compelled death to snatch from me all that I held most dear to me, dread, in your turn, the effect of my anger. You wish to lay down the law to me, you, whom we so often see receive it from me; you, who have a heart as susceptible as any other, you envy mine the delights which your own enjoys! But I shall pierce that self-same heart with strokes that shall be followed by nothing but jealous anxieties; I shall overwhelm you with shameful surprises, and everywhere select, for your sweetest affection, Adonises and Anchiseses who will only hate you.

SCENE V.—VENUS, CUPID, PSYCHE, *still in a swoon*.

VEN. The threat is respectful; and the presumptuous anger of a child who rebels . . .

CUP. I am no longer a child, and I have been too much so; and my anger is as just as it is impetuous.

VEN. Its impetuosity should be restrained; and you might remember that you owe your being to me.

CUP. And you ought not to forget that you have a heart and charms which depend on my power; that my quiver is the sole support of yours; that without my arrows it is nothing; and that, if the bravest hearts have allowed themselves to be led in triumph by you, you have never made slaves but those whom it has pleased me to enchain. Boast then no more, about those rights of birth which tyrannize over my desires; and if you do not wish to lose a thousand sighs, remember, when you see me, to be grateful; you who hold through my power both your glory and your pleasures.

VEN. How have you defended it, this glory of which you speak? How have you rendered it to me? And when you saw my altars desolate, my temples violated, my

honours disparaged, if you have sympathized with so much ignominy, how has the world seen Psyche punished, who robbed me of them? I commanded you to make her charmed with the vilest of all mortals, who should not deign to respond to her inflamed heart, but by eternal repulses, by the most cruel contempt; and you yourself have loved her! You have seduced immortal beings to be against me; it is for you that the Zephyrs hid her from my sight; that Apollo himself, suborned, by a skilfully tuned oracle had so cleverly borne her away from me, that if her curiosity had not, by a blind mistrust, restored her to my vengeance, she would have escaped my irritated heart. Behold the condition to which your love has brought your Psyche; her soul is about to depart; see; and if yours is still enamoured of her, receive her last sigh. Threaten, brave me, while she expires; so much insolence becomes you well; and I must endure whatever you please to say, I who can do nothing without your darts.

CUP. You can do but too much, relentless goddess! Fate abandons her entirely to your anger: but be less inexorable to the prayers, to the tears of a son at your feet. It ought to be a sufficiently pleasant sight to you to behold with one eye Psyche dying, and with the other this son, with a supplicating voice, only wishing to owe his happiness to you. Give me back my Psyche, give her back all her charms; give her back, goddess, to my tears; give back to my love, give back to my grief, the charm of my eyes and the choice of my heart.

VEN. With whatever love, Psyche may inspire you, do not expect to see an end to her misfortune through me. If Fate abandons her to me, I abandon her to her fate. Importune me no more; and, in this adversity, let her, without Venus, triumph or perish.

CUP. Alas! if I importune you, I would not do so if I could die.

VEN. This is no common grief that forces an immortal to wish for death.

CUP. Perceive, by the excess of my passion, how strong it is. Will you extend no mercy to her?

VEE. I own your passion touches my heart; it disarms me, it abates my rigour. Your Psyche shall see the light again.

CUP. How I will make you everywhere adored!

VEN. Yes, you shall again behold her in her pristine beauty; but I claim the entire deference of your grateful vows; I claim that an unfeigned respect shall leave my affection to choose you another spouse.

CUP. And I, I do not require mercy any longer; I resume all my boldness; I desire Psyche, I desire her love; I desire her to live again, and to live again for me; and I am indifferent if your tired-out hatred satiate itself on another. Jupiter, who is appearing, will judge between us of my passionate behaviour, and of your anger.

*(After several flashes of lightning and claps of thunder, Jupiter appears in the air, on his eagle.)*

SCENE VI.—JUPITER, VENUS, CUPID, PSYCHE,  
*still in a swoon.*

CUP. You, to whom alone everything is possible, father of gods, sovereign of mortals, abate the sternness of an unbending mother, who, without me, would have no altars. I have wept, I have prayed, I sigh and threaten; but in vain are sighs and threats. She will not perceive that on my displeasure depends the happy or mournful aspect of the whole world; and that if Psyche loses her life, if Psyche does not belong to me, I am no longer Cupid. Yes, I shall destroy my bow, I shall break in pieces my arrows; I shall even quench my torch, and let Nature languish until it dies; or, if I yet deign to pierce some hearts with these golden points which command obedience, I shall wound you all up there for mortal females, and shall aim none at them but blunted darts that force to hatred, and which will produce naught but rebels, ingrates, and cruel ones.<sup>30</sup> By what tyrannic law should I be bound to keep my weapons ever ready to serve you, and procure for you one conquest after another, if you forbid me to make one for myself?

JUP. (*To Venus*). Daughter, be less severe to him: you hold the fate of his Psyche in your hands; the fatal

<sup>30</sup> The idea of the effects of the different arrows is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book I.; Voltaire has also employed it in his comedy of *Nanine* (Act I., Scene 1).

sister, at your least word, will follow up your anger. Speak, and allow yourself to be overcome by a mother's tenderness, or dread an anger which I fear myself. Will you deliver up the world as a prey to hatred, disorder and confusion: and make a god of bitterness and strife of a god of union, of a god full of sweetness and of joy? Consider who we are, and if we ought to be swayed by passions. The more vengeance pleases men, the more it becomes the gods to pardon.

VEN. I pardon this rebellious son; but do you wish me to submit to the reproach that a miserable mortal, the object of my anger, the proud Psyche, because she is somewhat handsome, should sully my alliance and the bed of my son by a marriage at which I blush?

JUP. Well, then! I will make her immortal, so as to render things equal.

VEN. I have no longer hatred or contempt for her, and admit her to the honours of this conjugal bond. Psyche, come back to life, never to lose it again. Jupiter has made your peace: and I renounce that haughty disposition which opposed your wishes.

Ps. (*Recovering from her swoon*). It is then you, great goddess, who give life again to this innocent heart!

VEN. Jupiter has pardoned you, and my anger ceases. Live, Venus commands it; love, she consents to it.

Ps. (*To Cupid*). I see you again at last, dear object of my flame!

CUP. (*To Psyche*). You are mine at last, delight of my soul!

JUP. Come, lovers, ascend to Heaven, to consummate so distinguished and worthy a union. Come thither, lovely Psyche, to change your destiny. Come to take your place among the gods.

*Two large machines descend at the two sides of Jupiter, while he is speaking the last verses. Venus, with her attendants, mount into the one, Cupid and Psyche into the other, and they all go together up into the sky.*

*The divinities, who had been divided between Venus and her son, unite, seeing them agreed; and all by concerts, songs, and dances, celebrate the nuptials of Cupid. Apollo*

*appears the first, and as the god of harmony, commences to sing, to incite the other gods to rejoice.*

*Recital of Apollo.*

Let us unite, immortal troop ; the god of love becomes a happy lover, and Venus has regained her usual gentleness in favour of so charming a son. He is going to taste, after a long torment, a happiness which shall be eternal.

*All the divinities sing together the following verses in honour of Cupid.*

Let us celebrate this grand day, let us all celebrate so lovely a feast ; let our songs to all places spread the tidings ; let them re-echo through the heavenly regions. Let us sing, and repeat by turns, that there is no heart so cruel but what sooner or later surrenders to Cupid.

*Apollo continues.*

The god who invites us to pay him his court, forbids us to be too wise. Pleasures have their turn : it is their sweetest use to finish the cares of day. Night is the inheritance of pleasures and love. It would be a great pity that, in this charming spot, one should have a savage heart. Pleasures have their turn : it is their sweetest use to finish the cares of day. Night is the inheritance of pleasures and love.

*Two Muses, who have always avoided to enrol themselves under the laws of Cupid, counsel those fair ones, who have not loved yet, to defend themselves with great care from doing so, according to their example.*

*Song of the Muses.*

Take care, severe fair ones, love causes too much trouble ; ever fear to allow yourself to be charmed too much. When one has to sigh with love, all the evil does not consist in becoming enamoured ; the martyrdom of saying it costs a hundred times more than to love.

*Second Couplet of the Muses.*

One cannot love without pains ; there are few sweet

chains; at every moment one feels alarmed. When one has to sigh with love, all the evil does not consist in becoming enamoured; the martyrdom of saying it costs a hundred times more than love.

*Bacchus proclaims that he is not so dangerous as Cupid.*

*Song of Bacchus.*

If at times, following our sweet laws, reason is lost or forgotten, the follies which wine causes begin and finish in one day; but when a heart is drunk with love, it is often for the whole of life.

*Entry of the Ballet,*

*Composed of two Menades and two Egyptians who attend upon Bacchus.*

*Momus declares that he has no sweeter employment than to ridicule, and that it is Cupid only whom he dares not attack.*

*Recital of Momus.*

I seek to ridicule, on earth and in the heavens; I subject to my satire the greatest of the gods. There is no one in the universe but Cupid who abashes me. He is the only one whom I now-a-days spare. It is given only to him to spare no one.

*Entry of the Ballet,*

*Composed of four punchinelloes and two grotesque dancers, who attend upon Momus, and join their pleasantries and their gambols to the attractions of this grand entertainment.*

*Bacchus and Momus, who conduct them, sing in their midst, each a song, Bacchus in praise of wine, and Momus a song lauding the subject and advantage of ridicule.*

*Recital of Bacchus.*

Let us admire the juice of the grape: how powerful is it, what attractions has it! It adds to the sweetness of peace, and in war it performs wonders: but above all in love wine is a great help.



*Recital of Momus.*

Let us gambol and divert ourselves. Let us jeer, we cannot do better; ridicule is necessary in the sweetest games. Without the pleasure one finds in ridiculing, there are few pleasures without fatigue. Nothing is so pleasant as to laugh, when one laughs at the expense of others. Let us joke, let us spare nothing; let us laugh, nothing is more in fashion; one runs the risk of being a bore by saying too much good. Without the pleasure one tastes in ridiculing, there are few pleasures without fatigue. Nothing is so pleasant as to laugh when one laughs at the expense of others.

*Mars arrives on the stage, followed by his troop of warriors, whom he excites to profit by their leisure time in taking part in the recreations.*

*Recital of Mars.*

Let us leave the whole world in peace; let us seek for sweet amusements. Amongst the most charming games, let us mix the image of war.

*Entry of the Ballet.*

*Followers of Mars, who, dancing, execute with banners and standards a kind of evolution.*

*Last Entry of the Ballet.*

*The different troops of the attendants of Apollo, of Bacchus, of Momus, of Mars, after having executed their separate entries, unite and form the last entry together, which comprises all the others. A chorus of all the voices, and all the instruments, to the number of forty, accompanies the general dance, and finishes the celebration of the nuptials of Cupid and Psyche.*

*Last Chorus.*

Let us sing the charming pleasures of the happy lovers. Let the whole of heaven hasten to pay their court to them. Let us celebrate this glorious day by a thousand sweet songs of joy; let us celebrate this glorious day by a thousand sweet songs full of love.

*In the great hall of the Tuileries, where Psyche has been represented before their Majesties, there were kettledrums, trumpets, and drums mixed with the last songs; and the last song was sung in the following way.*

Let us sing the charming pleasures of the happy lovers. Respond to it, ye trumpets, kettledrums, and drums. Be always in accord with the sweet sounds of the bagpipes; be always in accord with the sweet songs of love.

LES FOURBERIES DE SCAPIN.  
COMÉDIE.

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THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN.  
A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

*(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)*

MAY 24TH, 1671.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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WHILST the King and the whole Court were in Flanders in 1671, Molière wished to produce a new play for the theatre of the Palais Royal, then freshly decorated, and he wrote *The Rogueries of Scapin*, which was performed on the 24th of May of the same year, and met with great success. It has been said that Molière wrote his farces to please the people: but with the exception of this comedy and *The Physician in Spite of Himself*, all his farces were written for, and first performed before the Court.

This comedy, in three acts, is partly classical, partly Italian, and partly French, and the character of Scapin enlivens the whole. Scapin is a master rogue, who robs, steals, and perjures himself; but all this in the most good-natured way imaginable. He cheats, not to benefit himself, but to be of advantage to Leander and Octave; he makes a fool of Géronte and Argante, merely to keep his hand in, and thrashes the first in revenge for having told a falsehood of him. Such a love for truth is wonderful in a man like Scapin whose intense roguery, fertile imagination, and gigantic impudence can exist only on the stage, but would soon reap in real life their well deserved reward.

The greater part of this play is taken from Terence's *Phormio*; or, *the Scheming Parasite*, of which the following is the subject.

Antipho, the son of Demipho, an Athenian, sees by accident Phanium, the unknown daughter of his uncle Chremes, and by the advice of Phormio, a parasite, marries her by trickery. Shortly after, his father and uncle return upon the same day, and are much vexed on hearing of this marriage. Phædria, the son of Chremes, wishes to raise some money to purchase a music-girl with whom he is in love; and Geta, a servant of Demipho, and Phormio arrange that the former shall pretend to the old man that Phormio has consented to take back the woman whom Antipho has married, if Demipho will give her a portion of thirty minæ. The latter gives the money to Phædria, who buys the girl. At this conjuncture, it becomes known that the wife of Antipho is really the daughter of Chremes; and they wish to get back the money from Phormio, who refuses, and finally betrays to Nausistrata, the Athenian wife of Chremes, the intrigue which the latter had carried on at Lemnos with the mother of Phanium.

The details of Molière's comedy are either from French or Italian origin.

It is said that the idea of Scapin's confession (Act ii., Scene 5) is taken

from an Italian farce, *Pantaloön, the Father of a Family*, where Harlequin, accused of having stolen something, falls on his knees and confesses to have committed many robberies of which he was never suspected. The scene of the sack (Act iii., Scene 2), which offended Boileau so much, was probably suggested to Molière by a farce which Tabarin acted in the open air, where an old miser, Lucas, takes the place of Captain Rodomont in a sack, and gets well beaten for his trouble by his own servant Tabarin, and by his daughter Isabella. The famous eleventh scene of the second act of *The Rogueries of Scapin* is borrowed chiefly from the fourth scene of the second act of *The Deceived Pedant*, written by Cyrano de Bergerac, which was published about 1654, and certainly acted long before Molière's play. The rogue in *The Deceived Pedant* is called Corbineli, the old miser, Granger—a parody of Jean Grangier, professor of rhetoric, and principal of the College of Beauvais—and Sylvester is called Paquier. The famous exclamation, "What the devil did he want in the galley?" is to be found there. There is also a similarity between the second scene of the third act of Bergerac's piece and the third scene of the third act of Molière's play. Molière, who probably knew Bergerac, when accused of having borrowed these scenes from the latter, is said to have replied, "These scenes were pretty good; I have taken them. People get hold again of their property where they find it."

There is also in *The Rogueries of Scapin* a reminiscence from a play of Plautus, called *Bacchides; or, the Twin Sisters*.

Ravenscroft (see Introductory Notice to *The Love-Tiff*, Vol. I., and Introductory Notice to *The Forced Marriage*, Vol. I.) has imitated part of Molière's comedy in his *Scaramouch, a Philosopher, Harlequin, a School-boy, Bravo, Merchant and Magician*, acted at the Theatre-Royal, 1677. Argante is called in this play Pancrace; Scapin, Plautino, and sometimes Harlequin; Octave is called Cynthio, and Leander Octavio.

Thomas Otway has also translated Molière's play under the title *The Cheats of Scapin*, acted at the Duke's Theatre in 1677, and dedicated to John, Earl of Rochester. Sylvester is called Shift; Argante, Thrifty; Géronte, Gripe; Carlos, Sly; Hyacinthe, Clara; and Zerbinette, Lucia. This appears to me the sole change which Otway has made, except that he has abbreviated, but not improved, some of the speeches.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ARGANTE, *father to Octave and Zerbinette.*

GÉRONTE, *father to Leander and Hyacinthe.*

OCTAVE, *son of Argante, and betrothed to Hyacinthe.*

LEANDER, *son of Géronte, and in love with Zerbinette.*

ZERBINETTE, *supposed a gipsy, afterwards found to be  
the daughter of Argante.*

HYACINTHE, *daughter of Géronte.*

SCAPIN, *valet to Leander.*

SYLVESTER, *valet to Octave.*

NÉRINE, *nurse to Hyacinthe.*

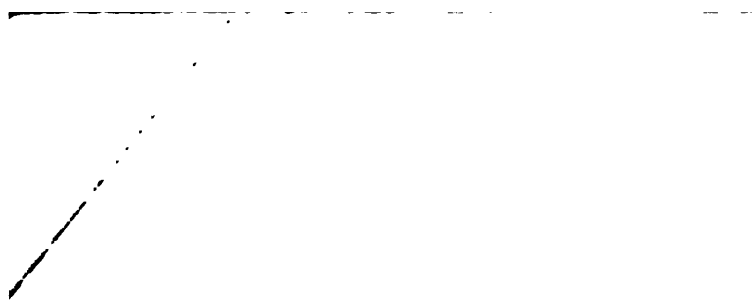
CARLOS, *Scapin's friend.*

THE SCENE IS AT NAPLES.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This part was played by Molière himself. Scapin is one of the traditional servants of the *commedia dell' arte*. The name Scapin is from the Italian *scappare*, to run away, to escape, either on account of the poltroonery which he displays in the Italian farces, or on account of the dexterity with which he manages to commit all kinds of rogueries.

<sup>2</sup> As the scene is laid in Naples, it shows at once that the poet will give free scope to his imagination.





# THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN.

(*LES FOURBERIES DE SCAPIN.*)

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## ACT I.

SCENE I.—OCTAVE, SYLVESTER.

OCT. Ah ! this is dire news to a heart in love ! a cruel strait to which I find myself reduced ! You have just heard at the port, Sylvester, that my father is about to return ?

SYL. Yes.

OCT. That he will arrive this very morning ?

SYL. This very morning ?

OCT. And that he comes back resolved to marry me ?

SYL. Yes.

OCT. To a daughter of Mr. Géronte ?

SYL. Of Mr. Géronte.

OCT. And that this young lady has been sent for from Tarente for that purpose ?

SYL. Yes.

OCT. And you have got this news from my uncle ?

SYL. From your uncle.

OCT. To whom my father has communicated this by letter ?

SYL. By letter.

OCT. And this uncle, you say, knows all about our affairs ?

SYL. All about our affairs.

OCT. Do speak, if it be all the same to you, instead of having the words dragged out of your mouth in that manner.<sup>3</sup>

SYL. What more would you have me say? You do not forget a single particular, and you state things just as they are.

OCT. Give me some advice, at least, and tell me what I am to do in this cruel plight.

SYL. In truth, I find myself as much at a loss as you are, and I have great need of advice myself.

OCT. I am bored to death by this confounded return.

SYL. I am not the less so.

OCT. When my father hears how matters stand, I shall find myself overwhelmed with a sudden storm of vehement scolding.

SYL. Scolding counts for nothing; and would to Heaven that I were quit at that rate! but, for my part, I am more likely to pay dearer for your follies; and I see already, gathering from afar, a cloud of cudgel-blows that will burst on my shoulders.

OCT. Oh Heavens! how am I to get out of this scrape?

SYL. You ought to have thought of that before getting into it.

OCT. Ah! you will be the death of me with your ill-timed lectures.

SYL. You will be much more the death of me with your thoughtless actions.

OCT. What am I to do? What resolution can I take? What remedy can I apply?

SCENE II.—OCTAVE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. What now, Mr. Octave? What ails you? What is the matter? What is amiss? You are very much upset, I see.

OCT. Ah my good Scapin, I am lost; I am desperate; I am the most unfortunate of men.

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<sup>3</sup> In *Milicerte*, Act ii., Scene 1 (see Vol. II.), a nearly similar scene takes place.

SCA. Why so ?

OCT. Have you learned nothing about what concerns me ?

SCA. No.

OCT. My father is coming back with Mr. G ronte, and they wish me to marry.

SCA. Well, what is there so terrible in that ?

OCT. Alas ! do you not know the cause of my uneasiness ?

SCA. No ; but it lies entirely with you for me to know it shortly ; I am of a consoling nature,<sup>4</sup> and ready to interest myself in young people's affairs.

OCT. Ah ! Scapin, if you could invent something, concoct some plot to get me out of the difficulty in which I am, I should think that I owed you more than my life.

SCA. Truth to tell, there are few things impossible to me, when it pleases me to meddle with them. There is no doubt that I have received from Heaven a genius, sufficiently fine to contrive all those pretty tricks of wit, those ingenious intrigues, to which the ignorant vulgar give the name of rogueries ; and I can say, without boasting, that there never was a man who was a cleverer manipulator of springs and traps, and who has won more glory at that noble craft than I. But, upon my word, merit is too badly treated now-a-days ; and I have given up all these things since a certain vexatious affair happened to me.

OCT. How ! what affair, Scapin ?

SCAP. An adventure through which I became embroiled with the law.

OCT. The law ?

SCA. Yes, we had a little quarrel together.

SYL. You and the law ?

SCA. Yes. It treated me very badly ; and I felt so nettled at the ingratitude of the age, that I made up my mind to have nothing more to do with it. Basta ! Do not let that interrupt the story of your adventure.

OCT. You are aware, Scapin, that two months ago Mr.

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<sup>4</sup> The original has *je suis homme consolatif*. This last adjective is no longer in use.

Géronte and my father went together on a voyage about a certain business in which their interests are connected.<sup>5</sup>

SCA. I know that.

OCT. And that Leander and I were left by our fathers, I under the care of Sylvester, and Leander under yours.

SCA. Yes. I have very well discharged that duty.

OCT. Some time after, Leander happened to meet with a young gipsy, with whom he fell in love.

SCA. This also I know.

OCT. Being fast friends, he immediately made me the confidant of his love, and took me to see this girl, whom I thought handsome, certainly, but not so much so as he would have had me think her. He did nothing else but entertain me about her each day, exalting every moment her beauty and her grace, lauding her wit, dilating rapturously upon the charms of her conversation, the most minute details of which he reported to me, and which he always endeavoured to make me find the most witty in the world. Often he quarrelled with me for my not being sensible enough to what he was telling me, and incessantly blamed me for my indifference to the flames of love.

SCA. As yet I fail to see where all this is leading to.

OCT. One day when I accompanied him to go to the people who were taking care of the object of his love, we heard, issuing from a small house, in an out-of-the-way street, some wailing intermixed with many sobs. We inquire the cause; a woman answers us, sighing, that there we could witness a most pitiful sight of some foreign people, and that, unless we were most insensible, we could not fail to be touched by it.

SCA. Where does this lead us to?

OCT. Curiosity made me induce Leander to go and see what it was. We entered a large room, where we saw a dying old woman, nursed by a servant uttering lamentations, and a young girl, the most handsome and the most interesting that ever was seen, melting into tears.

SCA. Ah! ah!

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<sup>5</sup> All that follows is taken from Terence's *Phormio*; but there it is a slave who tells the story.

OCT. Any one else would have appeared frightful in the state she was in ; for she had nothing to cover her but a miserable scanty petticoat, with a night boddice of common fustian ; and her head-dress was a yellow mob-cap, turned up on the crown, from which her hair fell in disorder on her shoulders ; and, notwithstanding, as she stood there, she shone with a thousand attractions, and there was nothing but grace and charm about her.

SCA. I can see the thing coming.

OCT. Had you seen her, Scapin, in the state in which I have described her, you would have thought her lovely.

SCA. Oh ! I do not doubt it ; and, without having seen her, I can fancy her altogether charming.

OCT. Her tears were none of those disagreeable tears that disfigure a face ; even in weeping, she had a winning grace, and her sorrow was the loveliest in the world.

SCA. I can perceive all this.

OCT. She moved everyone to tears, throwing herself affectionately on the body of the dying woman, whom she called her dear mother ; and there was not a soul which was not touched to the quick at seeing such a good character.

SCA. In fact, this is touching ; and I can easily imagine that this good character made you fall in love with her.

OCT. A barbarian would have done the same, Scapin.

SCA. Of course. One could not help it !

OCT. After a few words, with which I tried to assuage the sorrow of this charming afflicted girl, we went out ; and asking Leander what he thought of her, he answered me coldly that she was tolerably pretty. I felt nettled at the coldness with which he spoke of her, and I did not wish to reveal to him the effect which her beauty had produced on my heart.\*

SYL. (*To Octave*). If you do not cut this story short, we shall be in for it till to-morrow. Let me sum it up in two words. (*To Scapin*). His heart is all ablaze from that moment ; life becomes unendurable to him unless he goes to console his amiable bereaved. His frequent visits

\* Auger, one of the commentators of Molière, observes that Octave does not find Leander's gipsy sufficiently pretty, but is nettled because Leander is not smitten by the charms of Hyacinthe.

are declined by the servant, whom the death of the mother has raised to the post of governess. Behold my master in despair; he importunes, begs, implores; all of no use. He is told that the girl, though without means and without support, is of good family, and that his addresses will not be tolerated, unless he marries her. Behold his love increased by obstacles. He racks his brain, debates, reasons, hesitates, takes a resolution: the upshot of which is that he has been married to her these three days.

SCA. I understand.

SYL. Now, add to this the unforeseen return of his father, who was not expected these two months; the discovery by the uncle of the secret of our marriage, and the other projected union with the daughter of Mr. Géronte, by a second wife, to whom, they say, he was married at Tarente.

OCT. And, in addition to all this, put the poverty in which this amiable creature finds herself, and my inability to get the means wherewith to relieve her.

SCA. And is this all? You are both very much upset by a trifle! There is certainly much to be alarmed at! Are you not ashamed to be thus at your wits' end, for so small a matter? What the devil? there you are as tall and big as father and mother, and you cannot find in your head, nor your wit invent some lover's ruse, some honest little stratagem, to put your affairs straight! Fie! a plague upon the booby! I wish they had given me those greybeards of bygone days to lead by the nose; I would have had no difficulty in getting the better of them all; and I was not bigger than this, when I had already distinguished myself by a hundred pretty tricks.

SYL. I confess that Heaven has not given me those talents, and that I have not the wit to entangle myself with the law, as you have.

OCT. But here comes my dear Hyacinthe.

SCENE III.—HYACINTHE, OCTAVE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

HYA. Ah! Octave, is it true what Sylvester has just told Nérine, that your father is coming back, and that he wishes you to marry.

OCT. Yes, fair Hyacinthe; and those tidings have struck

me a cruel blow. But what do I see? you weep! Why these tears? Do you suspect, tell me, any inconstancy on my part? and are you not convinced of my love for you?

HYA. Yes, Octave, I am certain that you love me, but I am not so sure that you will always do so.

OCT. As if one could love you, and not love you for life?

HYA. I have heard it said, Octave, that your sex loves not so long as ours, and that the passions which men betray are fires which are as easily quenched as kindled.

OCT. Ah! my dear Hyacinthe, my heart in that case is not like that of other men; and, as regards myself, I feel that I shall love you till death.

HYA. I believe that you feel as you say, and I doubt not that your words are sincere; but I dread a power which will combat, in your heart, the tender sentiments which you may have for me. You are dependent on a father, who wishes to marry you to another; and I am sure that I should die should this misfortune come to pass.

OCT. No, fair Hyacinthe, there is no father who can compel me to break my faith with you; and, rather than leave you, I am determined to quit my country, and life itself if necessary. Without having even seen her, I have already taken an unconquerable dislike to the lady whom they intended for me, and, without being cruel, I wish that the sea would drive her far away from here for evermore. Do not cry, then, I beg of you, sweet Hyacinthe, for your tears kill me, and I cannot look at them without being grieved to the heart.

HYA. Since you wish it, I shall dry them, and I shall steadfastly await what it shall please Heaven to do with me.

OCT. Heaven will favour us.

HYA. As long as you are true, Heaven cannot be adverse.

OCT. I assuredly shall be so.

HYA. In that case I shall be happy.

SCA. (*Aside*). Upon my word, she is not such a fool; and I find her pretty tolerable.

OCT. (*Pointing to Scapin*). Here is a man who, if he liked, could be of wonderful assistance to us in all our needs.

SCA. I have made a solemn vow not to meddle any more with the world ; but, if both of you urge me very strongly, I might perhaps . . .

OCT. Ah ! if it wants nothing but strong urging to obtain your aid, I implore you with all my heart to undertake the guidance of our bark.

SCA. (*To Hyacinthe*). And you, have you nothing to say to me ?

HYA. I entreat of you, likewise, by all that is most dear to you in this world, to assist us in our love.

SCA. One must give way sometimes, and show some human feelings. You may be at rest, I shall interest myself for you.

OCT. Be assured that . . .

SCA. (*To Octave*). Hush ! (*To Hyacinthe*). And now go, and make yourself easy.

SCENE IV.—OCTAVE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. (*To Octave*). And you, prepare yourself with firmness to meet your father.

OCT. I confess that this meeting makes me tremble beforehand ; and I feel a natural timidity which I cannot overcome.

SCA. You must, however, appear firm at the first shock, for fear, that, seeing your weakness, he will lead you like a child. There, try to study calmness. A little boldness ; and take care to answer firmly everything which he may tell you.

OCT. I shall do my very best.

SCA. Come, let us rehearse a little, just to get your hand in. Let us repeat your part somewhat, and let us see if you will do well. Come ! a firm countenance, head erect, looks steady.

OCT. Like this !

SCA. A little more still.

OCT. In this way ?

SCA. That is it. Imagine me to be your father, who has just arrived, and answer me unflinchingly, as if I were he. How ! you scoundrel, you good for nothing wretch, you son unworthy of a father like me, do you dare to appear before me after your nice behaviour, after the vile



trick which you have played me during my absence? Is this the fruit of all my cares, you rogue? Is this the fruit of all my cares? the respect which is due to me, the esteem which you have for me? (That is it). And you have the insolence, you knave, to engage yourself without the consent of your father, to contract a clandestine marriage! Answer me, you rogue, answer me. Let us hear a few of your specious arguments. . . . Ah! what the devil! you have not a word to say.

OCT. It is because I fancy that it is my father whom I hear.

SCA. Eh. He of course. For this very reason you ought not to look like a simpleton.

OCT. I shall pluck up a little more resolution, and I shall answer with firmness.

SCA. Are you sure?

OCT. I am sure.

SYL. There comes your father.

OCT. Oh Heaven! I am lost.<sup>†</sup>

SCENE V.—SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. Hullo, Octave! stop, Octave. He has fled! What a poor specimen of a man! Let us wait for the old man.

SYL. What shall I say to him?

SCA. Leave it to me, and do as I do.

SCENE VI.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN, and SYLVESTER, *at the farther end of the stage.*

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Has ever the like been heard of?

SCA. (*To Sylvester*). He has already heard of the affair; and it so runs into his head, that he speaks aloud of it when alone.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). This is a very great piece of audacity!

SCA. (*To Sylvester*). Let us listen awhile.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). I should much like to know what they can tell me about this lovely marriage.

<sup>†</sup> This scene is taken from Terence, but is much shorter in the Latin dramatist.

SCA. (*Aside*). We have already thought about that.<sup>8</sup>

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Will they try to deny the affair?

SCA. (*Aside*). No, we do not dream of such a thing.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Or will they endeavour to exonerate themselves?

SCA. (*Aside*). Such a thing might be done.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). Will they pretend to entertain me with some unlikely stories?

SCA. (*Aside*). Perhaps so.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). All their speeches will be useless.

SCA. (*Aside*). We shall see about that.<sup>8</sup>

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). They shall not impose upon me.

SCA. (*Aside*). We ought not to swear to anything.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). I shall know how to put my rascal of a son under lock and key.

SCA. (*Aside*). We shall provide for that.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). And as for this scoundrel Sylvester, I shall give him a sound thrashing.

SYL. (*To Scapin*). I should have been much surprised if he had forgotten me.

ARG. (*Perceiving Sylvester*). Ah! Ah! you are there, trustworthy family guardian, conscientious guide of young men!

SCA. I am delighted to see you back again, sir.

ARG. Good day, Scapin. (*To Sylvester*). You have really carried out my orders in a nice manner! and my son has behaved very properly in my absence!

SCA. You are in good health, from what I see?

ARG. Pretty well. (*To Sylvester*). You have nothing to say, you rascal, nothing at all.

SCA. Has your journey been a pleasant one?

ARG. Pleasant enough, good Heaven! Let me have my quarrel in peace.

SCA. You wish to quarrel!

ARG. Yes, I wish to quarrel.

SCA. And with whom, Sir?

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<sup>8</sup> This is borrowed chiefly from Terence's *Phormio*.

ARG. (*Pointing to Sylvester*). With this scoundrel.

SCA. And why?

ARG. Have you not heard what has happened in my absence?

SCA. I have heard some little trifle spoken of.

ARG. What! some little trifle! An affair of that kind!

SCA. You are somewhat in the right.

ARG. A daring like this!

SCA. That is true.

ARG. A son who marries without the consent of his father?

SCA. Yes, there is something to be said in that respect. But I would advise not to make a noise about it.

ARG. I am not at all of this opinion; and I will make as much noise as I like. What! do not you think that I have every possible reason to be in a rage?

SCA. Yes, indeed. I was so myself at first, when I came to know of it, and I have taken your part so far as to quarrel with your son. Ask him, how thoroughly I have upbraided him, and the lesson which I have read him on the little respect he showed to a father whose footsteps he ought to kiss. I could not have spoken better to him, had I been yourself. But after all! I have come back to reason, and I have reflected, that at the bottom, he is not so much to blame as one would think.

ARG. What pretty tale is this? He is not so much to blame to go and get married point blank to a strange girl?

SCA. What could he do? He was led to it by his fate.

ARG. Ah! Ah! That is certainly the prettiest reason in the world. One has only to commit every imaginable crime, to cheat, to steal, to murder and to say in excuse that one was led to it by one's fate.

SCA. Good Heavens! you take my words in too philosophical a sense. I mean to say, that he has found himself fatally entangled in this affair.

ARG. And why did he entangle himself in it?

SCA. Do you expect him to be as wise as you? Young men will be young men, and have not all the prudence necessary to keep at all times out of mischief: witness our Leander, who, notwithstanding all my lessons, all my remonstrances, has gone, and done very much worse than

your son. I should very much like to know whether you yourself have not been young, and have not, in your time, committed follies like others. I have heard it said that, in by-gone days, you were a regular follower of the ladies; that you held your own with the most gallant of that time, and that you did not come near them without trying your utmost.

ARG. That is true, I agree to that; but I always confined myself to gallantry, and I never went so far as to do what he has done.

SCA. What would you have him do? He sees a young girl who looks favourably on him (for he takes after you in that, and is well looked upon by every woman); he finds her charming, pays her visits, whispers sweet nonsense to her, sighs gallantly, tries to pass for a passionate lover. She yields to his ardour; he takes advantage of his good luck. Behold him caught with her by her parents, who, by compulsion, oblige him to marry her.

SYL. (*Aside*). What a clever rogue this!

SCA. Would you have preferred him to allow himself to be killed? It is better to be married than to be dead.

ARG. They did not tell me that the affair happened thus.

SCA. (*Pointing to Sylvester*). Ask him if you like. He will tell you nothing to the contrary.

ARG. (*To Sylvester*). Is it by compulsion that he was married?

SYL. Yes, Sir.

SCA. Would I tell you a lie?

ARG. He ought to have gone then to a notary to protest against this violence.

SCA. That is what he would not do.

ARG. It would have made it easier for me to annul this marriage.

SCA. To annul this marriage?

ARG. Yes.

SCA. You will not annul it.

ARG. I shall not annul it, say you?

SCA. No.

ARG. What! have I not a father's rights in my favour, and the plea of the violence which has been done to my son?

SCA. Upon this point, he will not be at one with you.

ARG. He will not be at one with me?

SCA. No.

ARG. My own son?

SCA. Your own son. Would you have him confess that he could be frightened, and that it was by force that they have made him do those things. He will know better than to admit that; it would be wrong to himself, and proclaim him unworthy of a father like you.

ARG. I do not care for that.

SCA. It is necessary, for his honour and for yours, that he say in society that he has married her of his own free will.

ARG. And I desire, I, for my honour and for his, that he shall say the reverse.

SCA. No, I am sure he will not do so.

ARG. I shall force him to it.

SCA. He will not do it, I tell you.

ARG. He shall do it, or I shall disinherit him.

SCA. You?

ARG. I.

SCA. Good!

ARG. What do you mean by good!

SCA. You will not disinherit him.

ARG. I shall not disinherit him?

SCA. No.

ARG. No?

SCA. No.

ARG. Aha! that is a good joke! I shall not disinherit my son?

SCA. No, I tell you.

ARG. Who shall prevent me?

SCA. You, yourself.

ARG. I?

SCA. Yes, you will not have the heart to do it.

ARG. I shall.

SCA. You are joking.

ARG. I am not joking at all.

SCA. A father's feelings will perform their functions.

ARG. They shall do nothing of the kind.

SCA. Yes, yes.

ARG. I tell you that it shall be.

SCA. Nonsense.

ARG. Do not say that it is nonsense.

SCA. Good Heavens! I know you; you are naturally good-hearted.

ARG. I am not at all good-natured, and I can be very spiteful when I like.\* Let us drop this subject which provokes my temper. (*To Sylvester*). Go, you rascal, go and fetch my scamp, while I look in upon Mr. G ron te, to tell him of my disgrace?

SCA. Sir, if I can be of use in anything, you have but to command.

ARG. I thank you. (*Aside*). Ah! why should he be an only son! and why have I not at this hour the daughter of whom Heaven has deprived me, to make her my heiress.

#### SCENE VII.—SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SYL. I confess that you are a great man, and that the business is in a fair way; but, on the other hand, we are urgently pressed for money for our wants; and on all sides there is a lot of people barking after us.

SCA. Let me manage it, the trick is found. I am only seeking in my own mind a man upon whom we can depend to impersonate one of whom I am in want. Wait. Hold yourself up a little. Slouch your cap like a naughty boy. Put one leg forward. Put your hand on your hip. Just look ferocious. Swagger up and down like a king on the stage. That is right. Follow me. I know a secret to disguise your face and voice.

SYL. Let me beg of you, at least, not to get me into a scrape with the law.

SCA. Be not afraid. We shall share the danger like brothers; and three years at the galleys more or less will not deter a noble heart.

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\* This dialogue from "I shall disinherit him" until "when I like" is found also in *The Imaginary Invalid*, when Argan speaks of placing his daughter in a convent. Hence, La Grange, and Vinot, the first editors of the collected works of Moli re, have left out this passage in *The Rogueries of Scapin*.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.—GÉRONTE, ARGANTE.

GER. Yes, I doubt not, if this weather last, we shall have our people here to-day; and a sailor who came from Tarente assures me that he has seen my man ready to embark. But the arrival of my daughter will find things in an unfavourable state for what we proposed; and what you have just told me about your son strangely puts an end to the measures we had agreed upon.

ARG. Do not trouble yourself about it; I assure you that I shall overthrow this obstacle, and I shall see about it immediately.

GER. Upon my word, Mr. Argante, shall I tell you? the bringing up of children is a thing which must be managed with a firm hand.

ARG. Without a doubt. What do you mean, though?

GER. What I mean is this, that the bad conduct of young people is most frequently caused by the bad education which their fathers have given them.

ARG. This happens sometimes. But what would you convey by this?

GER. What would I convey by this?

ARG. Yes.

GER. That had you, as a strict father, kept your son well in hand, he would not have played you the trick which he has.

ARG. Very good. Thus you have kept yours better in hand?

GER. There is no doubt of it; and I should be very sorry if he had done anything like this.

ARG. And if this son, which, as a strict father, you have kept so well in hand, had done worse still than mine? Eh!

GER. How?

ARG. How?

GER. What does that mean?

ARG. It means, Mr. Géronte, that one must not be too quick to censure the conduct of others; and that those who are fond of finding fault ought to look first at home to see if there be nothing wrong.

GER. I do not understand this riddle.

ARG. It shall be explained to you.

GER. Have you perchance heard something about my son?

ARG. May be.

GER. And what, then?

ARG. When I was angry, your Scapin told me the affair only in a summary way, and you can get the details from him, or from some one else. As for me, I am going quickly to consult a lawyer, to take advice about the means which I have to use. Till by and by.

SCENE II.—GÉRONTE, *alone*.

GER. What can this affair be? Worse still than his? As for me, I cannot see that one could do worse; and I think that to marry without the consent of one's father is a deed that excels everything imaginable.

SCENE III.—GÉRONTE, LEANDER.

GER. Ah! here you are!

LEA. (*Running to G ron te to embrace him*). Ah! father, how glad I am to see you back again!

GER. (*Refusing to embrace Leander*). Gently. A little business first.

LEA. Allow me to embrace you, and to . . .

GER. (*Still pushing him back*). Gently, I tell you.

LEA. What, father! you refuse me to show you my joy by embracing you?

GER. Yes. We have something to unravel together.

LEA. What is that?

GER. Stand straight, that I may look you in the face.

LEA. What is the matter?

GER. Look me full in the face.

LEA. Well?

GER. What has happened here?

LEA. Happened here?

GER. Yes. What have you done in my absence?

LEA. What should I have done, father?

GER. It is not I who wish to have done something, but who ask what you have been doing?



LEA. I? I have not done anything of which you have cause to complain.

GER. Not anything?

LEA. No.

GER. You are very firm.

LEA. Because I am perfectly sure of my innocence.

GER. Scapin has, however, told me some news about you.

LEA. Scapin?

GER. Ah! ah! that word makes you blush.

LEA. He has told you something about me?

GER. This is not at all the proper place to get at the bottom of this business, and we shall sift it elsewhere. Go home; I shall be back there presently. Ah! wretch, if you have disgraced me, I renounce you as my son, and you can make your mind up to leave my presence for ever.

SCENE IV.—LEANDER, *alone*.

To betray me in this manner. A scoundrel who, for a hundred reasons, ought to be the first to keep secret the things which I confide to him, is the first to disclose them to my father. Ah! I swear to Heaven that his treachery shall not remain unpunished.

SCENE V.—OCTAVE, LEANDER, SCAPIN.

OCT. My dear Scapin, how much I owe to your cares! What an admirable fellow you are! and how good has Heaven been to send you to my aid!

LEA. Ah! ah! you are here! I am delighted to have found you, Mr. Rascal.

SCA. Your servant, Sir. You do me too much honour.

LEA. (*Drawing his sword*). You play the saucy fool. Ah! I shall teach you. . . .

SCA. (*Falling on his knees*). Sir!

OCT. (*Coming between them to prevent Leander striking Scapin*). Ah! Leander!

LEA. No, Octave, do not hold me back, pray.

SCA. (*To Leander*). Eh! Sir!

OCT. (*Holding Leander back*). For mercy's sake!

LEA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). Let me satisfy my resentment.

OCT. For friendship's sake, Leander, do not ill-treat him.

SCA. What have I done to you, Sir?

LEA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). What have you done to me, you wretch!

OCT. (*Holding Leander again back*). Eh! Gently.

LEA. No, Octave, I wish to make him confess the treachery which he has practised on me just now. Yes, you scoundrel, I know the trick which you have played me; I have just been told of it, and you did not think perhaps that this secret would be revealed to me; but I shall have the confession from your own mouth, or I shall pass this sword through your body.

SCA. Ah, Sir, would you have the heart to do this?

LEA. Speak then.

SCA. Have I done anything to you, Sir?

LEA. Yes, you scoundrel, and your conscience tells you but too plainly what it is.

SCA. I assure you that I am ignorant of it.

LEA. (*Advancing to strike Scapin*). You are ignorant of it?

OCT. (*Holding Leander back*). Leander!

SCA. Well! Sir, since you will have it so, I will confess that I and my friends have drunk that small quarter cask of Spanish wine which you had as a present a few days ago; and that I made a slit in the barrel, and spilt some water around to make you believe that the wine had run out.

LEA. It is you, you gallows-bird, who have drunk my Spanish wine, and who have been the cause of my scolding the servant, thinking it was she who had played me that trick?

SCA. Yes, Sir. I ask your pardon for it.

LEA. I am very glad to hear this. But that is not the affair in question at present.

SCA. It is not that, Sir.

LEA. No: it is something else which concerns me much more, and I will have you tell me.

SCA. I do not remember having done aught else, Sir.

LEA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). You will not tell me?

SCA. Tell what?

OCT. (*Holding Leander*). Gently!

SCA. Well, Sir, it is true that three weeks ago you sent me one evening to take a little watch to the young gipsy whom you love. I came back to the house, my clothes covered with mud, and my face bleeding, and I told you that I had been attacked by thieves who had beaten me well, and stolen the watch. It was myself who kept it, Sir.

LEA. It is you who have kept my watch?

SCA. Yes, Sir, to see what o'clock it is.

LEA. Ah! Ah! these are pretty things to find out, and I have a very trusty servant, certainly! But it is not even about that that I am inquiring.

SCA. It is not that?

LEA. No, you infamous wretch; there is something else that I wish you to confess to me.

SCA. (*Aside*). The plague take it!

LEA. Out with it, quick, I am in a hurry.

SCA. This is all that I have done, Sir.

LEA. (*Wishing to strike Scapin*). Is that all?

OCT. (*Getting in front of Leander*). Ah!

SCA. Well! yes, Sir. You remember that ghost, six months ago, who dealt you such a lot of cudgel-blows in the night, and nearly made you break your neck in a cellar in which you fell, running away.

LEA. Well?

SCA. It was I, Sir, who played the ghost.

LEA. It was you who played the ghost, you wretch?

SCA. Yes, Sir, I did it only to frighten you, and to prevent you from letting us gad about every night as you did.

LEA. I shall remember, at fit time and place, all that I have just learned. But I wish to come to the fact, and have you to confess what you have been saying to my father.

SCA. To your father?

LEA. Yes, you rascal, to my father.

SCA. I have not even seen him since his return.

LEA. You have not seen him?

SCA. No, Sir.

LEA. Are you sure?

SCA. Quite sure. I can make him tell you so himself.

LEA. It is from himself that I have got it.

SCA. By your leave, he has not spoken the truth.

SCENE VI.—LEANDER, OCTAVE, CARLOS, SCAPIN.

CAR. I am the bearer of some news, Sir, which is ill-fated to your love.

LEA. How so?

CAR. The gipsies are on the point of carrying away Zerbinette; and she herself, with tears in her eyes, has charged me to come and tell you quickly, that if within two hours, you do not bring them the money which they claim for her, you will lose her for ever.

LEA. In two hours?

CAR. In two hours.

SCENE VII.—LEANDER, OCTAVE, SCAPIN.

LEA. Ah! my good Scapin, I implore you to help me.

SCA. (*Passing haughtily before Leander*). Ah, my good Scapin! I am my good Scapin now that you need me.

LEA. Come, I forgive you for all you have said to me, and for worse still, if you have done it to me.

SCA. Not at all, not at all, do not forgive me anything; run your sword through my body; I shall be delighted to be killed by you.

LEA. No. I rather beg of you to give me my life, by helping me with my love.

SCA. Not so, not so; you had better kill me.

LEA. You are too precious to me; and I beseech you to be willing to employ for me that admirable talent of yours that overcomes all things.

SCA. No, kill me, I tell you.

LEA. Ah! for mercy's sake, think no more about it, and set your wits to work to give me the help which I ask from you.

OCT. Scapin, you must do something for him.

SCA. How can I, after such an outrage.

LEA. I beg of you to forget my passion, and to use your skill for me.

OCT. I add my prayers to his.

SCA. I have that insult still on my mind.

OCT. You must forego your resentment.

LEA. Would you leave me, Scapin, in this cruel plight in which my love finds itself?

SCA. To come and insult me unawares in that way?

LEA. I am in the wrong, I admit.

SCA. To call me a scoundrel, a rascal, a gallows-bird, an infamous wretch!

LEA. I regret it with all my heart.

SCA. To wish to run his sword through my body!

LEA. I beg your pardon for it from the bottom of my heart; and if nothing will satisfy you but to see me on my knees beseeching you once more not to abandon me, I will do so.

OCT. Ah! upon my word, Scapin, you ought to give way now.

SCA. Rise. The next time do not be so hasty.

LEA. Will you promise me to set to work for me?

SCA. We will think about it.

LEA. But time presses, as you know.

SCA. Do not trouble yourself about it. How much do you want?

LEA. Five hundred crowns.

SCA. And you?

OCT. Two hundred pistoles.

SCA. I shall draw this money from your parents. (*To Octave*). As for yours, the train is already laid. (*To Leander*). And, as regards yours, though miserly to the last degree, it will cost far less trouble still; for, as to wit, you know, Heaven be praised, that he has not got a very great stock; and I think him a sort of man who will believe anything which you tell him. This without offence to you; for there is not the slightest similarity between him and you; and you know full well the opinion of every one, that he is your father only for form's sake.

LEA. Gently, Scapin!

SCA. All right, one does not mind that! Are you jesting? But I see Octave's father coming. Let us begin with him, since he comes to us. Get you both away. (*To Octave*). And you, tell your Sylvester to come quickly to play his part.

## SCENE VIII.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN.

SCA. (*Aside*). He is chewing the cud.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone*). To have so little decency and consideration. To rush headlong into an engagement like this! Ah! Ah! impertinent youth.

SCA. Your servant, Sir.

ARG. Good day, Scapin.

SCA. You are thinking about this affair of your son?

ARG. I tell you candidly that it puts me out greatly.

ARG. Life is bestrewed with crosses, Sir; it is as well to be always prepared for them; and I always bear in mind the saying of an ancient, which I heard a long time ago.

ARG. What is it?

SCA. That when a father of a family has been away from home for some time, he ought to let his mind run on all the sad accidents which he may meet on his return; ought to fancy his house burned down, his money stolen, his wife dead, his son maimed, his daughter corrupted; and whenever one of these things has not happened, impute it to his good luck. As for me, I have always practised this lesson in my little philosophy; and I have never returned home without holding myself ready for the anger of my masters, their abuse, their insults, their kicks, their whacks, their thrashings; and whenever I have had less, I have thanked my stars for it.<sup>10</sup>

ARG. This is all very well; but this impertinent marriage, which interferes with the one which we wish to contract, is a thing which I cannot bear, and I have just consulted lawyers to undo it.

SCA. In truth, Sir, if you take my advice, you will try, by some other means, to arrange this affair. You know what law-suits are in this country, and you will get yourself into some strange difficulties.

ARG. You are right, I see that well enough. But what other way is there?

SCA. I think that I have found one. The sympathy evoked by your sorrow just now, has made me consider about some means of quieting your uneasiness; for I do not like to see honest fathers vexed by their children,

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<sup>10</sup> This speech of Scapin is again borrowed from Terence.

without feeling for them; and I have at all times been particularly fond of you.

ARG. I am very much obliged to you.

SCA. I have been therefore to see the brother of this girl who has been married. He is one of those fire-eaters by profession, those people who are all cut and thrust, who talk of nothing else than slashing, and who make no more ado about killing a man than about swallowing a glass of wine. I have got him to speak about this marriage, have shown him the facility, offered by his own violence, to undo it, your prerogatives as a father, and the support you would receive from the law by reason of your right, your money, and your friends. In short, I have so turned him about on all sides, that he has listened to the proposals which I have made to him to settle the matter for a certain sum; and he will give his consent to annul the marriage, provided you give him the money.

ARG. And what did he require?

SCA. Oh! everything preposterous, at first.

ARG. And what?

SCA. Extravagant things.

ARG. But what, pray?

SCA. He talked of no less than five or six hundred pistoles.

ARG. Five or six hundred quartan fevers to make an end of him! Is he jesting?

SCA. That is what I told him. I utterly rejected all such proposals, and I plainly gave him to understand that you were not a dupe, to ask you for five or six hundred pistoles. At last, after a great deal of talk, this is the result of our conference. The time draws near, said he to me, that I must set out for the army; I am busy about my outfit, and the need which I have of some money makes me consent, in spite of myself, to what is proposed to me. I want a troop-horse, and I cannot have one, ever so middling, for less than sixty pistoles.

ARG. Very well! for sixty pistoles, I will give them.

SCA. Then the accoutrements and the pistols; and that will amount at least to twenty pistoles more.

ARG. Twenty pistoles and sixty make fourscore.

SCA. Exactly.

ARG. It is a good deal: but be it so. I consent to this.

SCA. He must also have a horse for his servant, which will cost at least thirty pistoles.

ARG. What the deuce! Let him go on foot; he shall have nothing at all.

SCA. Sir!

ARG. No: he is an impertinent fellow.

SCA. Would you have his servant go on foot?

ARG. Let him go as he likes, and the master also.

SCA. Good Heaven, Sir, do not stop short at such a trifle. Do not go to law, Sir, I beg you; and sooner give it all, to keep clear from its hands.

ARG. Very well then; I am ready to give also the thirty pistoles.

SCA. He wants, besides, so he says, a mule to carry . . .

ARG. Let him go to the devil with his mule! It is too much; and we shall go before the judges.

SCA. For mercy's sake, Sir . . .

ARG. No, I shall do nothing at all.

SCA. A tiny mule, Sir.

ARG. I shall not give him as much as an ass.

SCA. Consider . . .

ARG. No, I prefer going to law.

SCA. Oh, Sir, what are you talking about, and what a resolution to take? Just cast your eyes upon the ins and outs of the laws. Just think how many appeals and degrees of jurisdiction; how many vexatious proceedings; how many delightful animals, through whose claws you will have to pass: sergeants, attorneys, counsels, registrars, substitutes, reporters, judges, and their clerks. Not one of those folks but who will oppose the most straightforward case in the world for the merest trifle. A bailiff<sup>11</sup> will serve you with forged deeds, upon which you shall be condemned without your knowing it. Your attorney will come to terms with the other side, and sell you for ready cash. Your counsel, won over in the same manner, will be wanting when your cause has to be pleaded, or adduce reasons that shall only beat about the bush, but not go home to the facts. The registrar will deliver sentence

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<sup>11</sup> The original has *sergeant*.



and judgment against you in your absence. The clerk of the reporter will make away with documents, or the reporter himself will deny what he has seen ; and when, with the utmost precautions, you shall have parried all this, you will be astonished to find that your judges have been prejudiced against you, either by some pious people, or by the ladies with whom they are in love. Oh ! Sir, if it be in your power, keep out of this hell. It is to be damned already in this world, to have to plead ; and the mere notion of a law-suit would be enough to make me fly as far as the Indies.<sup>12</sup>

ARG. And at how much does he reckon this mule ?

SCA. For the mule, Sir, for the horse, and that of his man, for the accoutrements and pistols, and to pay a little bill which he owes his landlady, he asks in all two hundred pistoles.

ARG. Two hundred pistoles ?

SCA. Yes.

ARG. (*Walking about in a passion*). Never, never ; we shall go to law.

SCA. Reflect . . .

ARG. I shall go to law.

SCA. Do not throw yourself . . .

ARG. I shall go to law.

SCA. But to go to law, you want money. You must have money for the summons ; money for the registration ; money for the letter of attorney ; money for appearance, counsel, evidence, and solicitors' fees. Some will go for the consultations and the pleadings of the barristers ; for the right of redemption, and for engrossing copies of the case. You will want money for the reports of substitutes, for the sweetmeats at the end of the trial,<sup>13</sup> for the registration of the verdict, the form of decree, sentence, arrests, revision, the signing and countersigning of their clerks, without reckoning the presents which you will

<sup>12</sup> This picture of the vexations of a lawsuit in Molière's time is not much exaggerated.

<sup>13</sup> The original has *épices*, spices, because formerly those who had a lawsuit gave sweetmeats to the judges, to thank them for having gained their suit, and because spices were employed instead of sugar before India was discovered. These *épices*, which were at first voluntary, became afterwards a compulsory tax, which was paid in money.

have to make. Give this money to that man, and the affair is at end.

ARG. What ! two hundred pistoles !

SCA. Yes. You will be a gainer by it. I have made a little calculation, mentally, of all the law charges ; and I have found that by giving two hundred pistoles to your man, you will be the gainer by at least a hundred and fifty, without counting the anxiety, the going hither and thither, and the bother you shall save yourself. Were it for nothing else than to have to put up with the insults which those sorry waggish barristers say to one in public, I would sooner give three hundred pistoles than go to law

ARG. I do not care for that, and I defy the lawyers to say anything against me.

SCA. You shall do as you please ; but if I were you, I should fight shy of law-suits.

ARG. I shall not give two hundred pistoles.

SCA. Here comes the very man we are speaking of. "

SCENE IX.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN, SYLVESTER, *disguised as a swash-buckler.*

SYL. I say, Scapin, just show me this Argante, the father of Octave.

SCA. Why, Sir ?

SYL. 'I have just been told that he wishes to go to law with me, and by the law annul my sister's marriage.

SCA. I do not know if he intends to do so ; but he certainly does not consent to give the two hundred pistoles which you desire ; he says it is too much.

SYL. 'Sdeath, blood and wounds,'<sup>14</sup> if I find him I shall thrash him unmercifully, were I to be racked on the wheel for it afterwards. (*Argante, for fear of being seen, stands trembling behind Scapin.*

SCA. Let me tell you, Sir, that this father of Octave has some courage, and will perhaps not be at all afraid of you.

<sup>14</sup> This is again partly borrowed from Terence.

<sup>15</sup> The original has *par la tête ! par la ventre !*





**THE ROGUERIES OF SCAPIN.**

ACT II. SC. 8.



1171



SYL. What! he? he? blood and thunder!<sup>16</sup> if he were here, I would give him at once a taste of my sword in his belly. (*Perceiving Argante*). Who is this man?

SCA. It is not he, Sir; it is not he.

SYL. But perhaps it is one of his friends.

SCA. No, Sir; on the contrary, it is his greatest enemy.

SYL. His greatest enemy?

SCA. Yes.

SYL. Ah! forsooth! I am glad of it. (*To Argante*). Are you an enemy of this mean rascal of an Argante, Sir? Eh?

SCA. Yes, yes; I can answer for that.

SYL. (*Shaking Argante's hand violently*). Grasp it, shake hands. I give you my word and pledge you my honour, by the sword which I wear, by all the oaths which I could swear, that before the day is out I shall rid you of this ar-rant knave, this mean scoundrel of an Argante. Trust to me.

SCA. Violence is not tolerated in this country, Sir.

SYL. I do not care a rap, and I have nothing to lose.

SCA. He will be on his guard, you may depend; and he has got relatives, friends and servants, who will guard him against your resentment.

SYL. Zounds! that is all I ask, that is all that I ask for. (*Drawing his Sword*). Death and blood! Why is he not here with all his guard! Why does he not appear before me surrounded by thirty persons! Why does he not rush down upon me, arms in hand! (*Standing upon his guard*). Ah! you knaves, you have the audacity to attack me. Ah! Zounds! kill. (*Parrying on every side, as if he had several people to deal with*). No quarter! Advance. Stand firm. Push on! A sure foot, a quick eye. Ah! you scoundrels, you scum! that is what you want! You shall have plenty of it. Stand firm, you knaves, stand firm. Come on. Parry this thrust, and that one! (*Turning towards Scapin and Argante*). And this one. And that

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<sup>16</sup> The original has *par la sang, par la tête*. *Ventre* and *sang* are masculine, but here is understood *par la vertu de*, and the whole oath was *par la vertu du sang or du ventre de Dieu*. I have thought it needless to give a literal translation of these blasphemies.

one. What, you draw back! Stand firm, zounds, stand firm!"

SCA. Eh! eh! eh! Sir, we do not belong to them.

SYL. That will teach you to dare to meddle with me.

SCENE X.—ARGANTE, SCAPIN.

SCA. Well now! you see how many persons would be killed for two hundred pistoles. After this, I wish you good luck.

ARG. (*Trembling all over*). Scapin!

SCA. If you please?

ARG. I have made up my mind to give the two hundred pistoles.

SCA. I am glad of it for your sake.

ARG. Let us go and find him; I have got them with me.

SCA. You have only to hand them to me. You cannot, for your own honour, show yourself to him, after having passed in this place for some other person than you really are; and besides, I should fear that, revealing yourself to him, he might take it into his head to ask for more.

ARG. Yes; but I should be glad to see how I part with my money.

SCA. Do you mistrust me?

ARG. It is not that, but . . .

SCA. Forsooth, Sir, I am a rogue, I am, or an honest man; one of the two. Do you think I would deceive you, and that, in all this, I have aught else at heart than your interest and that of my master, to whom you wish to be allied? If you suspect me, I meddle no more with anything, and, from this moment, you may look for some one to arrange your affairs.

ARG. Take them.

SCA. No, Sir, do not intrust your money to me. I shall be very glad if you would employ some one else.<sup>17</sup>

ARG. Good Heavens! take it.

SCA. No, I tell you, do not trust yourself to me. Who knows but what I might wish to swindle you out of your money?

<sup>17</sup> A similar scene has been employed by the actor and dramatist Rosmond, in his *Dupe in Love*, performed in 1670.

<sup>18</sup> This is from Plautus' *Bacchis*.



ARG. Take it, I tell you ; do not let me have to squabble any longer. But be sure to take good guarantees from him.

SCA. Let me manage it ; he has not a fool to deal with.

ARG. I shall wait for you at my house.

SCA. I shall not fail to be there. (*Alone*). That is one. I have only to look for the other. Ah ! upon my word, here he is. It seems that Providence brings them into my net, one after another.

SCENE XI.—GÉRONTE, SCAPIN.

SCA. (*Pretending not to see Géronte*). Oh Heavens ! Oh unlooked-for misfortune ! Oh wretched father ! Poor Géronte, what will you do ?

GER. (*Aside*). What is he saying about me, with that sorrowful face ?

SCA. Is there no one to tell me where I can find M. Géronte ?

GER. What is the matter, Scapin ?

SCA. (*Running about the stage, and pretending not to see nor hear Géronte*). Where can I find him, to tell him of this misfortune ?

GER. (*Stopping Scapin*). What is it ?

SCA. In vain do I run everywhere to find him.

GER. Here I am.

SCA. He must be hiding in some place which no one can discover.

GER. (*Stopping Scapin*). Hullo ! are you blind that you cannot see me ?

SCA. Oh ! Sir, I could not meet you anywhere.

GER. I have been standing in front of you for nearly an hour. What has happened ?

SCA. Sir . . .

GER. What ?

SCA. Your son, Sir . . .

GER. Well ! my son . . .

SCA. Has met with the strangest accident in the world.

GER. What is it ?

SCA. A short time ago I met him looking so very sad about something that you had told him, and in which you have unreasonably enough mixed up my name ; and trying

to raise his low spirits, we went to take a row in the harbour. There, amongst several other things, our eyes were attracted by a Turkish galley, tolerably well equipped. A young Turk with a pleasant face, invited us to come on board, and held out his hand to us. We went. He showed us a thousand civilities, offered us a lunch, where we ate the most excellent fruit that can be found, and drank the finest wine in the world.

GER. What is there so very grievous in all this?

SCA. Stay a minute, Sir, I am coming to it. While we were eating, he put the galley out to sea; and, finding himself far enough from the port, he had me put into a boat, and sent me to tell you that, if you do not send him through me, immediately, five hundred crowns, he will carry your son away to Algiers.

GER. What, the deuce! five hundred crowns!

SCA. Yes, Sir, and what is more, he has only given me two hours to find them.

GER. Ah! the gallows-bird of a Turk! to murder me in this manner.

SCA. It remains with you, Sir, to take prompt measures to save from slavery a son whom you so tenderly love.

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. He did not dream of what would happen.

GER. Go, Scapin, go quickly, and tell this Turk that I shall send the authorities after him.

SCA. The authorities on the open sea! do you wish to make fools of people?

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. An adverse fate often leads people.

GER. You must, Scapin, you must show yourself now a faithful servant.

SCA. How so, Sir?

GER. By going to tell this Turk to send me back my son, and by putting yourself in his place, until I can raise the sum which he asks.

SCA. Eh! Sir, do you know what you are saying? and do you imagine that this Turk will have so little sense as to receive a poor wretch like me as a substitute for your son?

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. He did not dream of such a misfortune. Remember, Sir, that he has given me only two hours.

GER. He wants, you say . . .

SCA. Five hundred crowns.

GER. Five hundred crowns! Has he no conscience?

SCA. That is good; a Turk a conscience!

GER. Does he know what five hundred crowns means?

SCA. Indeed he does, Sir; he knows that it is fifteen hundred livres.

GER. Does he thank, the villain, that fifteen hundred livres are so easily to be found?

SCA. They are people who do not understand reason.

GER. But what the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. True. But after all, one cannot foresee these things. Pray, Sir, make haste.

GER. Look here, there is the key of my cupboard.

SCA. Good.

GER. You go and open it.

SCA. Very good.

GER. You will find a large key on the left hand side, which is the one of the garret.

SCA. Yes.

GER. You will take all the clothes which are in that large basket, and go and sell them to the old clothes-men to redeem my son.

SCA. [*Handing him back the key*]. Are you dreaming, Sir? The whole of which you speak will not fetch a hundred francs; and besides, you know the little time he has given me.

GER. But what the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. Oh! What a waste of words. Leave that galley alone, and remember that time flies, and that you run the risk of losing your son. Alas! my poor master! perhaps I shall never set eyes on you again while I live, and at this very moment they are carrying you away to Algiers as a slave. But Heaven is my witness that I have done all that I could for you, and that, if you are not bought off, nothing but the want of fatherly affection is to blame.

GER. Stay, Scapin, I will go and fetch that money.

SCA. Be quick about it, Sir; I tremble to hear the hour strike.

GER. Did you not say four hundred crowns?

SCA. No : five hundred crowns.

GER. Five hundred crowns !

SCA. Yes.

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley?

SCA. You are right : but make haste.

GER. Was there no other place to go to ?

SCA. That is true : but be quick.

GER. Ah ! that confounded galley.

SCA. (*Aside*). That galley lies heavy upon his heart.

GER. Stay, Scapin, I did not remember, I have just received the very sum in gold, and I did not think that I would have to part with it so soon. (*Taking his purse from his pocket, and holding it out to Scapin*). There, go and redeem my son.

SCA. (*Holding out his hand*). Yes, Sir.

GER. (*Still holding the purse, which he pretends to give to Scapin*). But tell this Turk that he is a scoundrel.

SCA. (*Still holding out his hand*). Yes.

GER. (*Recommencing the same thing*). An infamous wretch.

SCA. (*Still holding out his hand*). Yes.

GER. A man without honour, a robber.

SCA. Let me manage it.

GER. That he extorts five hundred crowns from me against all right.

SCA. Yes.

GER. (*Recommencing the same thing*). That I do not make them a present to him for ever.

SCA. Very good.

GER. (*Recommencing the same thing*). And that, if ever I catch him, I shall be revenged on him.

SCA. Yes.

GER. (*Putting the money back in his pocket and going*). Go, go quickly, and bring back my son.

SCA. (*Running after G ron te*). Hullo, Sir.

GER. What ?

SCA. Where is this money ?

GER. Have I not given it to you ?

SCA. No, indeed ; you put it back in your pocket.

GER. Ah ! it is this trouble that upsets my senses.

SCA. I see it does.

GER. What the devil did he want in that galley? Confounded galley! Villain of a Turk; may the devil take you!

SCA. (*Alone*). He cannot swallow the five hundred crowns which I have dragged away from him; but he is not quits with me yet; and he shall pay me in different coin for the trick he has played me with his son.<sup>19</sup>

SCENE XII.—OCTAVE, LEANDER, SCAPIN.

OCT. Well! Scapin, have you succeeded in your enterprise for me?

LEA. Have you done anything to get my love affair out of the plight it is in?

SCA. (*To Octave*). Here are two hundred pistoles which I have drawn from your father.

OCT. Ah! how glad you make me!

SCA. (*To Leander*). I have not been able to do anything for you.

LEA. (*Going*). I had better go and make an end of myself; for I cannot live if Zerbinette is taken from me.

SCA. Hullo! hullo! gently. What a dreadful hurry you are in!

LEA. (*Turning back*). What is to become of me?

SCA. Never mind, I have got what you want.

LEA. (*Returning*). Ah! you restore life to me.

SCA. But on condition that you shall allow me a little piece of retaliation upon your father for the trick which he has played me.

LEA. Anything you please.

SCA. You promise it before a witness?

LEA. Yes.

SCA. Catch hold, here are the five hundred crowns.

LEA. Let us go quickly to redeem my charmer with them.

<sup>19</sup> In the Introductory Notice I have already stated that this scene is borrowed from Cyrano de Bergerac's play *The Deceived Pedant*, where a Turkish galley is lying at anchor in the Seine. Molière's comedy takes place on a coast which was exposed to the attacks of Turkish rovers; besides, the taking of Candia by the Turks, in 1669, had given a fresh interest to all adventures with which Turks were mixed up.

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—ZERBINETTE, HYACINTHE, SCAPIN,  
SYLVESTER.

SYL. Yes, your lovers have decided between them, that you should remain together; and we are discharging the order which they have given us.

HYA. (*To Zerbinette*). Such an order has nothing but what is very agreeable to me. I gladly welcome such a companion; and it will not be my fault if the friendship existing between the persons whom we love does not extend to us.

ZER. I accept the proposal, and am not one to draw back when friendship is in question.

SCA. And when love is in question?

ZER. As for love, that is a different thing; one runs a little more risk, and I am not so rash about that.

SCA. You are so against my master now, I believe; and what he has just done for you ought to give you the heart to respond in the right manner to his love.

ZER. I do not as yet trust him unconditionally; and all that he has done does not entirely reassure me. I am of a lively disposition, and I am always laughing: but for all that, I am serious upon certain subjects; and your master will make a mistake, if he thinks that to have bought me is sufficient to make me wholly his own. It will cost him something else besides money; and if he wishes that I should return his passion in the same manner, he will have to give me a pledge of his faith, accompanied by certain ceremonies which are thought indispensable.

SCA. That is what he means to do. His intentions are nought but right and honourable; and I would not have been the one to meddle with this affair if he had had different intentions.

ZER. That is what I wish to believe, since you tell me so; but, on the father's part, I expect some obstacles.

SCA. We shall find the means of arranging matters.

HYA. (*To Zerbinette*). The similarity of our positions ought to contribute to the growth of our friendship; and we find ourselves both in the same plight, both exposed to the same misfortunes.

ZER. You have this advantage at least that you know who gave you birth, and that the support of your parents, whom you can disclose, is likely to arrange everything, to assure your happiness, and to command a consent to a marriage which is already contracted. But, as for me, I receive no assistance from my position in life; and I am in a condition which will hardly mollify a father who looks only to wealth.

HYA. You have yet the advantage, that your lover is not tempted by another match.

ZER. The change in a lover's heart is not what is most to be feared. One may naturally believe one's own merits sufficient to retain one's conquests; and what I dread most in this sort of affairs, is the paternal power, in whose eyes merit counts for nothing.

HYA. Alas! why must our best affections be thwarted! How sweet it is to love, when there are no obstacles to those gentle chains with which two hearts are united!

SCA. You are jesting; a smooth love affair is a disagreeable calm. An uninterrupted happiness becomes tiresome; there must be ups and downs in life; and the difficulties about things awaken the desires, and increase the pleasures.

ZER. By the bye, Scapin, tell us the story, which I have been given to understand is so amusing, of the trick which you made use of to draw money from your old miser. You know that it is not labour lost to tell me a tale, and that I reward it well enough by the pleasure which it gives me.

SCA. There is Sylvester, who will manage it as well as I. I have got a little bit of revenge in my mind, of which I shall relish the pleasure.

SYL. Why will you, out of mere light-heartedness, get yourself into awkward scrapes?

SCA. I like to attempt hazardous enterprises.

SYL. I have already told you, if you take my advice, to abandon your project.

SCA. Just so; but I shall take my own advice in this matter.

SYL. What the devil are you going to be up to?

SCA. What the devil are you bothering yourself about?

SYL. Because I see that you are running, unnecessarily, the risk of drawing a storm of cudgel-blows upon you.

SCA. Well! It is at the cost of my back, not of yours.

SYL. It is true that you are master of your own shoulders, and may dispose of them as you please.

SCA. That kind of danger has never stopped me; and I hate those chicken-hearted fellows, who, because they look too much at the sequel of events, never dare to undertake anything.

ZER. (*To Scapin*). We shall need your help.

SCA. Lead on. I shall be with you presently. It shall never be said, that they have with impunity almost made me betray myself and disclose secrets which it would be as well that nobody knew.

SCENE II.—GÉRONTE, SCAPIN.

GER. Well, Scapin, how goes the affair of my son?

SCA. Your son is safe enough, Sir; but you yourself, Sir, are running the greatest danger in the world, and I would give a good deal that you were in your own house.

GER. How is that?

SCA. At this very moment, you are looked for everywhere to be killed.

GER. I?

SCA. Yes.

GER. And by whom?

SCA. By the brother of this person whom Octave has married. He believes that the design which you have to place your daughter in the position now occupied by his sister, is the reason which induces Argante to leave no stone unturned to annul their marriage; and, with that idea, he has openly resolved to vent his despair on you, and to take your life to avenge his honour. All his friends, knights of the blade like himself, are looking for you everywhere, and inquiring after you. I myself saw here and there some soldiers of his company, who are guarding in platoons every approach to your house, examining every one whom they meet: so much so that you cannot go home, nor walk a step, right or left, without falling into their hands.

GER. What am I to do, my good Scapin?

SCA. I do not know, Sir; it is a strange affair altogether. I tremble from head to foot for you, and . . .



Wait a moment (*Scapin pretends to look at the farther end of the stage whether any one is there.*

GER. (*Trembling*). Eh?

SCA. (*Coming back*). No, no, no, it is nothing.

GER. Cannot you find some means to get me out of trouble?

SCA. I have thought about one; but I run the risk of being knocked down myself.

GER. Come! Scapin, show yourself a faithful servant. Do not leave me in the lurch, I beg of you.

SCA. I am willing enough. I have this much regard for you, that I should not like to leave you without assistance.

GER. You shall be well rewarded for it, I assure you; and I promise you this coat, when I have worn it a little.

SCA. Stay. Just the very thing I have hit upon to save you. You must get into this sack, and . . .

GER. (*Fancying he sees somebody*). Ah!

SCA. No, no, no, no, there is no one. You must, I say, get into this, and take care not to stir in the least. I shall hoist you on my back like a bundle of something, and I shall carry you in that way through the midst of your enemies, into your house, where, once we get in, we can barricade ourselves, and send for assistance against this violence.

GER. The idea is good.

SCA. The best in the world. You shall see. (*Aside*). I shall be even with you for the cheat.

GER. What do you say?

SCA. I say that your enemies will be taken in nicely. Get well to the bottom; and above all take care not to show yourself, and not to move, happen what may.

GER. Let me manage: I know how to keep myself . . .

SCA. Hide yourself; here comes a swash-buckler who is looking out for you (*disguising his voice*). "What! shall I not have the delight of killing this G ron te, and will no one out of charity point me out where he is?" (*To G ron te in his natural voice*). Do not stir. "Cad dis! I shall find him if he were hidden in the bowels of the earth." (*To G ron te in his natural voice*). Do not show yourself. (*The counterfeited language is supposed to be*

*Gascon, the remainder his own*).<sup>20</sup> Ah! you man with the sack." Sir. "I will give you a louis if you tell me where I can find this G ron te." You are looking for M. G ron te? "Yes. Zounds, I am looking for him." And what for, Sir? "What for?" Yes. "Because I want to cudgel the life out of him, cad dis." Oh, indeed, Sir; but folks like him do not ordinarily receive cudgel-blows, and he is not a man to stand that sort of treatment. "Who? that booby of a G ron te, that scoundrel, that blockhead?" M. G ron te, Sir, is neither a booby, nor a scoundrel, nor a blockhead; and you ought to speak in another tone. "How dare you give me any of your insolence?" I am defending, as I ought to do, a man of honour, who is being insulted. "Are you one of the friends of this G ron te?" Yes, Sir, I am. "Ah! cad dis, you are one of his friends. So much the better." (*Striking several times on the sack with a stick*). "There, take this, and that, in his stead." (*Shrieking as if he were being struck*). Ah, ah, Sir, that'll do. Ah, ah, Sir, gently. Ah, gently. Ah, ah, ah. "There, give him this from me. Adiusias." (*Complaining and moving his back as if he had received some cudgel-blows*). Ah, the devil take the Gascon! Ah!

GER. (*Thrusting his head out of the sack*). Ah, Scapin, I can endure it no longer.

SCA. Ah! Sir, I am bruised all over, and my shoulders pain me dreadfully.

GER. How is that! It is on mine that he has been beating.

SCA. No, indeed, Sir, it is my back that he has been pummelling.

GER. What do you mean? I have felt the blows well enough, and feel them yet.

SCA. No, I tell you; it is only the end of his stick that came down upon your shoulders.

GER. You ought therefore to have gone a little farther away in order to spare me . . .

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<sup>20</sup> The words printed in italics are in the Gascon dialect, which is untranslatable. Here is a specimen of the first sentence in the original: *Cadedis, j  l  trouverai, s  cah t-il au centre d  la terre.*

SCA. (*Pushing his head back again into the sack*). Be careful; here comes another, who has the look of a stranger. (*This by-play is the same as that of the Gascon, for the change of language and the stage-business*).<sup>21</sup> "Gone, I have been running like a Basque, and I cannot find this devil of a G ron te." Hide yourself well. "Tell me a little, you mister Gentleman, if you please, do not you know where this G ron te is, whom I am looking for?" No, Sir, I do not know where G ron te is. "Tell me candidly; I do not want much with him. I only want to treat him to a dozen or so of cudgel-blows on his back, and three or four sword thrusts through his breast." I assure you Sir, that I do not know where he is. "It seems to me that there is something moving in this sack." Not at all, Sir. "I am sure that there is something in there." Not at all, Sir. "I have a good mind to pass my sword through this sack." Oh! Sir, do not do anything of the sort. "Let me look a little what is in there." That will do, Sir. "How, that will do!" You have no business with what I am carrying. "And I will have business with it." You shall not see it. "Ah! what nonsense is all this." They are some clothes belonging to me. "Show me, I tell you." I shall do nothing of the kind. "You shall do nothing of the kind?" No. "Then I shall break this stick on your shoulders." I do not care for that. "Ah you want to play the fool with me." (*Striking the sack with the stick, and howling as if he were receiving the blows*). Aye, aye, aye. Ah! Sir, ah, ah, ah. "Till we meet again, this will be a little lesson to teach you not to be insolent." Ah! plague on the jabbering thief! Ah!

GER. (*Thrusting his head out of the sack*). Ah! I feel as broken on the wheel.

SCA. Ah! I am dead.

GER. Why the deuce must they pummel my back?

SCA. (*Putting his head back into the sack*). Take care;

<sup>21</sup> My foregoing remark as to the difficulty of rendering provincial dialect into English applies also to this scene, which is given in an Alsatian accent. Here is the first sentence in the original: *Parti! moi courir comme une Basque, et moi ne pouvre point troufair de tout le jour sti tiab le de Giron te.*

here is half a dozen soldiers together. (*Imitating the voices of several persons*). "Come let us try to find G ron te, let us look everywhere. Do not let us stand still over it. Let us rummage the whole town. Do not let us miss a single spot. Let us go everywhere. Let us peep into every nook and corner. Which way shall we go? This way. No, through here. To the left. To the right. Not at all. Yes, yes." (*To G ron te, in his natural voice*). Hide yourself well. "Ah, mates, here is his servant. Come, you rascal, you must tell us where your master is." Ah! gentlemen, do not ill-use me. "Come, tell us where he is. Speak. Make haste, look sharp, be quick, speak up." Oh, gentlemen, gently. (*G ron te, thrusts his head softly out of the sack, and becomes aware of Scapin's trick*). "If you do not help us to find your master directly, we shall overwhelm you with cudgel-blows." I prefer suffering everything rather than show you my master. "We shall beat the life out of you." Do as you please. "You wish to be cudgelled?" I will not betray my master. "Ah, you wish to be beaten? There then . . ." Ah! (*As he is about to strike, G ron te gets out of the sack, and Scapin runs off*). GER. (*Alone*). Ah! infamous wretch! Ah! traitor! Ah! scoundrel! Is it thus that you assault me?

## SCENE III.—ZERBINETTE, G RONTE.

ZER. (*Laughing, without perceiving G ron te*). Ha, ha! I must have a breath of air.

GER. (*Aside, without seeing Zerbinette*). You shall pay for this, I swear.

ZER. (*Without seeing G ron te*). Ha, ha, ha, ha! What an amusing story! and what a dupe they have made of the old man!

GER. There is nothing amusing in it; and you have no business to laugh at it.

ZER. What is the matter! what do you mean, Sir?

GER. I mean that you have no business to make a jest of me.

ZER. Of you?

GER. Yes.

ZER. How? Who intends to make a jest of you?

GER. Why do you come here to laugh in my very face?

ZER. This does not concern you at all, and I was only laughing at a story that I have just been told, the funniest I ever heard. I do not know whether it is because I am interested in the matter; but I have never heard anything more laughable than the trick that has just been played by a son on his father to get hold of some money.

GER. By a son on his father to get hold of some money?

ZER. Yes. If you are at all curious, you shall find me ready enough to tell you the tale; for I am always itching to retail the stories I know.

GER. Pray tell me this one.

ZER. I do not mind. I shall not risk much by telling it to you, and it is an adventure that will not long remain a secret. Fate would have it that I should fall among a gang of people whom they call gipsies, and who, wandering from one country to another, make it their business to tell people's fortunes, and to do many things besides. On reaching this town, a young man happened to see me, and conceived an attachment to me. From that moment, he dogged my footsteps; and at first he was like all other young men, who think that they have only to speak, and that at the least word which they say to us, their business is done; but he found a resistance which made him somewhat alter his first opinions. He confided his passion to the people in whose hands I was; and he found them willing to leave me to him, in consideration of a certain sum of money. But the worst of the thing was, that my lover was in the same position in which we so often find the majority of young men of good birth; that is, he was a little short of money. His father, though rich, is a downright skinflint, the nastiest wretch on earth. Wait a little. Can I not remember his name? Stop. Perhaps you can help me. Can not you name some one in this town, who is noted for being miserly to the last degree?

GER. No.

ZER. There is a ron in his name . . . route . . . Or . . . Oronte. No. Gé . . . Géronte. Yes, Géronte, that is it; that is my shabby individual; I have got it; that is the stingy churl of whom I am talking. To come to our story, our people wished to get away from this

town to-day; and my lover was going to lose me for lack of money, had he not luckily been assisted by the cleverness of his servant to get some out of his father. As for the name of the servant, I know it perfectly well. It is Scapin; he is a wonderful fellow, and he deserves all the praise in the world.

GER. (*Aside*). Ah! scoundrel that you are!

ZER. This is the trick of which he made use to get the money out of his dupe. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I cannot help laughing heartily when I think of it. Ha, ha, ha, ha! He goes to this stingy cur . . . ha, ha, ha; and tells him that while walking with his son near the port, hi, hi, they saw a Turkish galley, on board of which they were invited; that a young Turk offered them a lunch. Ha; that while they were at table, the galley was put off to sea, and that the Turk had sent him back ashore by himself in a skiff, with the order to tell his master's father that he was going to carry his son away to Algiers with him unless he sent him five hundred crowns immediately. Ha, ha, ha! Behold my churl, my miser, in the most furious agonies; and the tenderness for his son struggling curiously with his avarice. The five hundred crowns required of him are just so many dagger thrusts levelled at his heart. Ha, ha, ha. He cannot make up his mind to tear that sum from his very bowels; and the pain which he suffers makes him devise a hundred ridiculous ways of getting his son back again. Ha, ha, ha. He wants to send the authorities after the Turk's galley on the open sea. Ha, ha, ha. He induces his servant to go and offer himself to take the son's place, until he has scraped together the money which he does not intend to part with. Ha, ha, ha. In order to make up the five hundred crowns, he is going to sell four or five old suits which are not worth thirty. Ha, ha, ha. The servant tries at every turn to show him the preposterousness of his proposal; and every reflection is dolefully accompanied by a What the devil did he want in that galley? Oh! confounded galley! scoundrel of a Turk! At last after many twistings and turnings, after having wailed and sighed ever so long . . . But it seems to me that my story does not amuse you; what do you think of it?

GER. I think that the young man is a hangdog, an insolent scoundrel, who shall be punished by his father for the trick he has played him ; that the gipsy is a jade, an impertinent girl, to insult a man of honour who will teach her to come here and corrupt young men of quality ; and that the servant is a rascal who will be sent to the gallows by G ron te before to-morrow.<sup>22</sup>

SCENE IV.—ZERBINETTE, SYLVESTER.

SYL. Where did you go to ? Are you aware that you have been talking to the father of your lover ?

ZER. I just thought so ; and, inadvertently, I have been telling him his own story.

SYL. How, his own story ?

ZER. Yes. I was full of the tale, and bursting to tell it again. But what does it matter ? So much the worse for him. I do not see that things, so far as we are concerned, can be mended or marred by it.

SYL. You had a great mind to chatter ; and I call it talking with a vengeance not to be able to keep one's own secrets.

ZER. Would he not have found it out from some one else ?

SCENE V.—ARGANTE, ZERBINETTE, SYLVESTER.

ARG. (*Behind the scenes*). Hullo ! Sylvester.

SYL. Go indoors. Here is my master calling me.

SCENE VI.—ARGANTE, SYLVESTER.

ARG. So you have put your heads together, you rascals ; you have arranged between you, Scapin, you and my son, to cheat me ; and you think that I shall bear it ?

SYL. Look here, Sir, if Scapin cheats you, I wash my hands of it, and assure you that I have no part nor parcel in it.

ARG. We shall see about this business, you rogue ; we

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<sup>22</sup> This scene is also partly imitated from *The Deceived Pedant* of Cyrano de Bergerac ; but in the latter play, the lady, Genev te, in relating the story to the pedant Granger, knows that he was the hero of it : whilst Zerbinette does not know G ron te.

shall see about this, and I do not wish to be treated like a goose.<sup>22</sup>

SCENE VII.—GÉRONTE, ARGANTE, SYLVESTER.

GER. Ah! M. Argante, you behold me overwhelmed with disgrace.

ARG. You behold me also in a terrible affliction.

GER. That hangdog Scapin, by one of his roguish tricks, has swindled me out of five hundred crowns.

ARG. That same hangdog Scapin, by a similar roguish trick, has swindled me out of five hundred pistoles.

GER. Not content with doing me out of five hundred crowns, he has treated me in a manner which I am ashamed to tell you. But he shall pay me for it.

ARG. He shall have to give me satisfaction for the trick he has played me.

GER. And I mean to be signally revenged upon him.

SYL. (*Aside*). Would to Heaven that I had not had a share in all this!

GER. But this is not all, M. Argante; and one misfortune is generally the fore-runner of another. I was rejoicing to-day in the prospect of having my daughter, who is my only consolation, with me, and now I have just heard from my man that she set out a good while ago from Tarente, and that it is thought that she went down with the vessel in which she embarked.

ARG. But why, pray, did you keep her at Tarente, and not give yourself the pleasure of having her always with you?

GER. I had my reasons for this; and family interests have obliged me until now to keep my second marriage a great secret. But whom do I see?

SCENE VIII.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

GER. What, you here, nurse?

NER. (*Throwing herself at the feet of Géronte*). Ah, M. Pandolphe . . .

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<sup>22</sup> The original has *je ne prétends pas qu'on me fasse passer la plume par le bec*; because, in order to prevent geese from going through the hedges, a feather is stuck through the upper part of their beaks.



GER. Call me G ronte, and do not use this name any longer. The reasons no longer exist which obliged me to take it among you at Tarente.

NER. Alas ! what troubles and uneasiness this change of name has caused us in the pains which we took to find you out here !

GER. Where is my daughter and her mother ?

NER. Your daughter, Sir, is not far from this ; but before I let you see her, I must beg your pardon for having married her, in the destitute condition in which I was with her, through not finding you.

GER. My daughter married ?

NER. Yes, Sir.

GER. And to whom ?

NER. To a young gentleman named Octave, son of a certain M. Argante.

GER. Oh, Heavens !

ARG. What a coincidence !

GER. Take us, take us quickly to her.

NER. You have only to enter this house.

GER. Lead the way. Follow me, follow me, M. Argante.

SYL. (*Alone*). This is an adventure which is altogether surprising.<sup>24</sup>

SCENE IX.—SCAPIN, SYLVESTER.

SCA. Well, Sylvester, what are our folks doing ?

SYL. I have two pieces of news to tell you. The one is, that the affair of Octave is arranged. Our Hyacinthe is found to be the daughter of M. G ronte ; and chance has accomplished what the prudence of the fathers had planned. The other piece of news is, that the two old men are threatening Heaven and earth against you ; and above all M. G ronte.

SCA. That is nothing. Threats have never done me any harm ; and they are clouds that pass very high over our heads.

SYL. Take care of yourself. The sons may make it up with the fathers, and you be left in the lurch.

<sup>24</sup> This ending again is partly followed from the last scene of Terence's *Phormio*.

SCA. Let me manage. I shall find the means of appeasing their anger, and . . .

SYL. Get away, they are coming out.

SCENE. X.—GÉRONTE, ARGANTE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

GER. Come, daughter, come home to me. My joy would have been complete, if I could have seen your mother with you.

ARG. Here comes Octave, just in time.

SCENE XI.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, OCTAVE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

ARG. Come, my son ; come and rejoice with us in the happy accident of your marriage. Heaven . . .

OCT. No, father, all your proposals of marriage will be useless. I must take off the mask with you, and you have been told of my engagement.

ARG. Yes, but you do not know . . .

OCT. I know all which I ought to know.

ARG. I wish to tell you that the daughter of M. Géronte . . .

OCT. The daughter of M. Géronte will never be anything to me.

GER. It is she . . .

OCT. (*To Géronte*). No, Sir ; I ask your pardon ; my resolutions are taken.

SYL. (*To Octave*). Listen . . .

OCT. No. Hold your tongue. I shall listen to nothing.

ARG. (*To Octave*). Your wife . . .

OCT. No, I tell you, father ; I shall sooner die than leave my gentle Hyacinthe. (*Crossing the stage to place himself at the side of Hyacinthe*). Yes, you may do what you like ; here she is, to whom my troth is plighted. I shall love her all my life, and do not want another wife.

ARG. Very well ! it is she whom we give to you. What devil of a madcap who always goes ahead !

HYA. (*Pointing to Géronte*). Yes, Octave, here is my father, whom I have found : and all our troubles are ended.

GER. Let us go home; we shall be more comfortable than here to discuss matters.

HYA. (*Pointing to Zerbinette*). Ah! father; I ask you as a favour that I may not be parted from this amiable girl whom you see. Her merits will make you like her, when you come to know her.

GER. Would you have me harbour a person with whom your brother is in love, and who just now has insulted me to my very face?

ZER. I beg of you to excuse me, Sir. I should not have spoken so, had I known that it was you; and I only knew you by hearsay.

GER. How! only by hearsay?

HYA. Father, the passion which my brother has for her has nothing guilty in it, and I answer for her virtue.

GER. That is very good. Would you not have me marry my son to her? A strange girl, whose profession is to run about the country.

SCENE XII.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, LEANDER, OCTAVE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER.

LEA. Father, do not complain any longer that I love a stranger, without birth or riches. Those of whom I have bought her have just disclosed to me that she belongs to this town, and comes of an honourable family, from whom they kidnapped her at the age of four: and here is a bracelet which they have given me, and which may help us to find her parents.

ARG. Alas! to see this bracelet, it must be my daughter, whom I lost at the age you mention.

GER. Your daughter?

ARG. Yes, it is she; and I see in every one of her features the certainty of it. My dear daughter! . . .

HYA. Good Heavens! what extraordinary adventures!

SCENE XIII.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, LEANDER, OCTAVE, HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SYLVESTER, CARLOS.

CAR. Alas! gentlemen, a strange accident has just now happened.

GER. What is it?

CAR. Poor Scapin . . .

GER. Is a scoundrel, whom I shall have hanged.

CAR. Alas, Sir! you will not have the trouble. In passing by a house they were building, there fell on his head a stone-mason's hammer, which has broken the bone and laid bare the whole of his brain. He is dying, and he has begged to be brought here, to be able to speak to you before he dies.

ARG. Where is he?

CAR. Here he comes.

SCENE XIV.—ARGANTE, GÉRONTE, LEANDER, OCTAVE,  
HYACINTHE, ZERBINETTE, NÉRINE, SCAPIN,  
SYLVESTER, CARLOS.

SCA. (*Carried by two men, his head wrapt round with bandages, as if he had been wounded*). Aye, aye, gentlemen, behold me . . . Aye, you see me in a sad condition. Aye. I did not wish to die before having asked forgiveness of every one whom I may have offended. Aye. Yes, gentlemen, before breathing my last sigh, I beseech you with all my heart, to forgive me for all I may have done to you; but particularly M. Argante, and M. Geronte. Aye.

ARG. As for me, I forgive you; go, die in peace.

SCA. (*To Geronte*). It is you, Sir, whom I have offended most by the cudgel-blows, which . . .

GER. Speak no longer of it, I forgive you also.

SCA. It was a great audacity on my part, those cudgel-blows, which . . .

GER. Let us drop that.

SCA. Now that I am dying, it gives me inconceivable pain to think about those cudgel-blows which . . .

GER. Good Heaven! hold your tongue.

SCA. Those unlucky cudgel-blows which I . . .

GER. Hold your tongue, I tell you; I forget everything.

SCA. Alas! what goodness! but is it heartily, Sir, that you forgive me those cudgel-blows which I . . .

GER. Ah! yes. Let us speak no more about them: I forgive you everything: there is an end of it.

SCA. Oh Sir, I feel altogether relieved by that word.

GER. Yes; but I forgive you only on condition that you shall die.

SCA. How! Sir?

GER. I retract my word, if you recover.

SCA. Aye, aye. There is my faintness coming on again.

ARG. M. G ron te, in return for our joy, you must forgive him unconditionally.

GER. Be it so.

ARG. Let us all go and sup together, the better to relish our pleasure.

SCA. And let them carry me to the foot of the table, while I am waiting for my death.



LA COMTESSE D'ESCARBAGNAS.

COMEDIE.

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THE COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS.

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

*(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)*

DECEMBER 2D, 1671.





## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

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WE have already stated that during the rejoicing of the second marriage of Monsieur, the brother of Louis XIV., with the Princess Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria, the King had given some splendid festivals for the reception of his sister-in-law, in which several comedies and ballets were performed, which were called *Ballet des ballets*.<sup>1</sup> Molière was commanded to write a comedy in which all the different entertainments, opera and ballets, should be combined; and hence he wrote *The Countess of Escarbagnas*, which was represented before the Court at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the 2d of December, 1671. There was a prologue and a pastoral, the whole forming seven acts, each followed by an interlude. The prologue and interludes were taken from pieces formerly composed for the Court, such as *The Magnificent Lovers*, *George Dandin*, *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*, and the *Ballet of the Muses*: but it is not known what these seven acts were, which are mentioned in the official book of the ballet.

*The Countess of Escarbagnas* represents nearly all provincials, inhabitants of small towns, with the habits and manners of country louts. The Countess is not a high-born lady, but the widow of some petty nobleman. She has been only a short time at Court, but has picked up sufficient wickedness to allow M. Harpin, one of her three admirers, to pay for the expenses of her household and her tradesmen. The receiver of taxes knows, of course, the power of money, and is therefore not so obsequious to birth as the gentle, gallant counsellor-at-law. He shows, on the contrary, his purse-proud vulgarity, and at the same time a certain shrewdness, whilst M. Tibaudier spends his time in writing rubbish, and in mixing law words with his elegant and pretentious phraseology, but in such a way as not to offend the noble widow. M. Bobinet is a representative of that class who are obliged, through necessity, to teach, and whose lot, I am afraid, has not much improved since the days of Molière. Even the servants have a distinct physiognomy; and as we perceive that all these persons move, live, and stand out from the canvass,—and that in one act—we recognize the masterhand of Molière.

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<sup>1</sup> See Introductory Notice to *Psyché*.

*The Countess of Escarbagnas* was represented in the theatre of the Palais Royal, on the 8th of July, 1672, and was performed fourteen consecutive times, always with *The Compulsory Marriage*, which seems to have taken the place of the Court entertainments. It was never printed during Molière's lifetime, and appeared for the first time only in the edition of 1682, published by La Grange and Vinot.

James Miller has imitated a short dialogue between the Countess and Andrée in *The Man of Taste* (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I.,) and between the Countess and Criquet.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE COUNT, *son of the Countess of Escarbagnas.*

THE VISCOUNT, *Julia's lover.*

MR. TIBAUDIER, *counsellor-at-law, in love with the Countess.*

MR. HARPIN, *receiver of taxes, also in love with the Countess.*

MR. ROBINET, *tutor to the Count.*

JEANNOT, *Tibaudier's lacquey.*

CRIQUET, *the Countess's lacquey.*

THE COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS.

JULIA, *in love with the Viscount.*

ANDRÉE, *attendant to the Countess.*

THE SCENE IS AT ANGOULEME.

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## THE COUNTESS OF ESCARBAGNAS.

(*LA COMTESSE D'ESCARBAGNAS*).

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### SCENE I.—JULIA, THE VISCOUNT.

VIS. Eh what, Madam! you are here already!

JUL. Yes. You ought to blush for it, Cléante; and it is not at all gallant in a lover to be the last at the trysting place.

VIS. I should have been here an hour ago, if there were no bores in the world; and I have been stopped on the road by an old troublesome nobleman, who expressly asked me for tidings from the court, in order to tell me some, the most extravagant that could well be retailed; and these great newsmongers, who look about everywhere to spread the stories which they pick up, are, as you know, the plagues of small towns. This one has, first of all, shown me two sheets of paper, scribbled up to the edge with a large mass of nonsensical stories, which, he told me, came from the most reliable sources. After which, as a great curiosity, he has read me in a tiresome way, and with an air of great mystery, all the bad jokes of the Dutch *Gazette*,<sup>2</sup> the interests of which he has espoused. His opinion is that France is battered down by the pen of this writer; and that it only wants this wit to undo all our troops; and from this he has thrown himself headlong into

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<sup>2</sup> Louis XIV. had just succeeded in dissolving the triple alliance between England, Sweden, and the United Provinces; hence the bitterness of the Dutch newspapers, which was one of the excuses which the French king brought forward to justify the war with Holland.

reviewing the ministry, whose every shortcoming he noticed ; and with which, I thought, he would never have finished. To hear him speak, he knows the secrets of the cabinet better than those who make them. The policy of the state allows him to see all its designs ; and it moves not a step, of which he cannot fathom the motives. He informs us of the hidden springs of everything that is done, lays bare to us the prudential views of our neighbours, and sets agoing, at his own fancy, all the affairs of Europe. His information extends even to Africa and Asia ; and he is informed of everything that is going on in the council of state of Prester-John<sup>a</sup> and of the great Mogul.

JUL. You adorn your excuse in the best way you can, in order to make it agreeable, and to have it more easily accepted.

VIS. This is, fair Julia, the true cause of my being behind ; and, if I wish to give a gallant excuse, I should only have to tell you that the place of meeting which you have selected might authorize the delay with which you reproach me ; that to induce me to play the lover of the mistress of the house, is to make me fear of being here the first ; that this feint to which I constrain myself being only to please you, I am induced not to wish to suffer the annoyance of it, except in the presence of her who is amused by it ; that I avoid the *tete-a-tete* with this ridiculous Countess, with whom you hamper me ; and, in one word, that, coming here but for you, I have all the reasons possible to await until you are here.

JUL. We well know that you are never wanting in wit, wherewith to give nice colours to the faults which you may commit. If, however, you had come half-an-hour earlier, we would have profited by all these moments ; for on my arrival, I found that the Countess had gone out, and I do not doubt that she has gone into town to plume herself upon the comedy which you give me in her name.

VIS. But in all earnest, Madam, when will you put an end to this annoyance, and make me buy less dearly the happiness of seeing you ?

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<sup>a</sup> Prester John was a fabulous King of Teneduc, or, according to others, of Ethiopia.

JUL. When our parents shall be able to agree ; I dare not hope such a thing. You know, as well as I do, that the dissensions of our families do not allow us to see each other elsewhere, and that my brothers, as well as your father, are not sufficiently reasonable to sanction our attachment.

VIS. But why not take more advantage of the place of meeting which their animosity still leaves open to us ; and oblige me to lose in a silly feint the moments which I spend with you ?

JUL. The better to hide our love ; and again, to tell you the truth, this feint of which you speak is a very pleasant comedy to me ; and I do not know whether the one you are going to give us to-day will amuse me better. Our Countess of Escarbagnas, with her perpetual hobby of quality, is as good a character as one could put on the stage. The little excursion which she has made to Paris has brought her back to Angoulême more perfect than she was. The proximity of the court-air has given new charms to her absurdity, and her silliness does but grow and become more beautiful every day.

VIS. Yes ; but you do not consider that the sport which amuses you keeps my heart on the rack, and that one is not able to enjoy this very long, when there is so serious a passion in one's mind as the one which I feel for you. It is cruel, fair Julia, to let this amusement rob my love of moments which it would employ in expressing its ardour to you ; and, this night, I have made some verses upon the subject, which I cannot refrain from reciting to you, without your asking for them, so much is the eagerness of reading one's works a vice inseparable from the condition of a poet !

Too long, Iris, have you put me to the torture ;

Iris, as you perceive, is put there for Julia.

Too long, Iris, have you put me to the torture,  
And if I obey your laws, I blame them silently  
For forcing me to conceal the torment which I endure,  
To confess a pain which I do not feel.

Must your fair eyes, to which I yield my arms,  
Amuse themselves with my sad sighs?  
And is it not enough that I should suffer for your charms,  
Without making me also suffer for your pleasures?

This double martyrdom is too much at one time;  
And what I am to keep silent, and what I am to utter,  
Exercises equal cruelty on my heart.

Love sets it on fire, restraint kills it;  
And if by pity you are not overcome,  
I die both by the feint and by the truth.

JUL. I see that you make yourself out to be more ill-treated than you are; but to tell falsehoods wantonly, to attribute to their mistresses cruelties which they do not feel, is a license which gentlemen poets take, to accommodate themselves to the ideas with which they may be inspired. I should, however, be very glad, if you would give me these verses in writing.

VIS. It is enough to have recited them to you, and I must stop at that. It is allowed to be sometimes foolish enough to make verses, but not to wish to have them looked at.

JUL. It is useless to screen yourself behind a mock-modesty; the world knows that you have wit; and I do not see any reason why you should conceal yours.

VIS. For Heaven's sake! Madam, let us carefully pass over this, if you please; in this world it is dangerous to meddle with having wit. There is a certain ridicule attached to this which one catches easily, and some of our friends make me fear their example.

JUL. Good Heavens! Cléante, you may say what you like. I see for all this that you are dying to give them to me; and I would embarrass you if I pretended not to care for them.

VIS. I, Madam! you are jesting; do not believe that I am so much of a poet as to . . . But here comes our Countess of Escarbagnas. I am leaving by the other door so as not to meet her, and am going to prepare all my people for the entertainment which I have promised you.



SCENE II.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET, *at the far end of the stage.*

COUN. Ah! Good Heavens! Madam, are you all alone? What a pity that is! All alone! I fancied that my people had told me that the Viscount was here.

JUL. It is true that he came; but it was quite sufficient for him to know that you were not here, to make him leave again.

COUN. What! he has seen you?

JUL. Yes.

COUN. And has he said nothing to you?

JUL. No, Madam; and by this he wished to show that he is entirely devoted to your charms.

COUN. Really, I shall tax him with this behaviour. Whatever love one may have for me, I like those who love me to render what is due to the sex; and my disposition is not like that of those unjust women who plume themselves on the incivilities which their lovers show to other fair ones.

JUL. You should not be surprised at his behaviour, Madam. The love with which you inspire him shows itself in all his actions, and prevents his having eyes for any one except you.

COUN. I believe myself capable of causing a sufficiently strong passion, and I think myself sufficiently handsome, young, and well-born, thank Heaven; but that does not hinder that, though I inspire love, they should be civil and polite to others. (*Perceiving Criquet*). What are you doing here, fellow? Is there no ante-room in which to dawdle, to come when you are called? It is strange that in the provinces one cannot have a lacquey who knows his place! To whom am I speaking? Will you go outside, you little rogue?

SCENE III.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE.

COUN. (*To Andrée*). Come here, girl.

AND. What may you please to want, Madam?

COUN. Take off my hood. Gently, then, you awkward girl: how you pull my head about with your heavy hands!

AND. I am doing it, Madam, as gently as I can.

COUN. Yes; but as gently as you can is very rough to my head, and you have dislocated it for me. Hold this muff also; do not let all this trail about, and take it to my wardrobe. Well! where is she going to? where is she going to? What is she about, this goose?<sup>4</sup>

AND. I wish to take this to your mistress of the robes,<sup>5</sup> as you told me.

COUN. Good Heavens! the ninny! (*To Julia*). I beg your pardon, Madam. (*To Andrée*). I said to you my wardrobe, you big fool; that means where my dresses are kept.

AND. Is a closet called a wardrobe at court, Madam?

COUN. Yes, booby; the place where the dresses are kept is so called.

AND. I shall bear this in mind, Madam, for your attic also, which ought to be called a ward-furniture.<sup>6</sup>

#### SCENE IV.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN. What a trouble one has to teach these animals?

JUL. I think them very happy, Madam to be under your discipline.

COUN. It is a daughter of my foster-mother whom I have taken to wait upon me; and she is quite new to it yet.

JUL. You have acted nobly, Madam; and it is glorious to train creatures like that.

COUN. Come, seats here. Hullo, fellows, fellows, fellows! Upon my word, this is too bad, not to have a lacquey to hand chairs! Girls, fellows; fellows, girls; some one! I believe that all my people are dead, and that we shall be obliged to get chairs for ourselves.

#### SCENE V.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE.

AND. What do you wish, Madam?

COUN. One has to shout loud with you people.

<sup>4</sup> The original has *oison bridé*, bridled goose. See page 388, note 23.

<sup>5</sup> There is a joke in the original which cannot be rendered into English. *Une garde-robe* is a wardrobe, but *une garde-robe* is the Mistress of the Robes at Court.

<sup>6</sup> The original has *garde-meuble*, furniture-warehouse, lumber-room.

AND. I was putting your muff and hood away in your press . . . I mean, in your wardrobe

COUN. Call me this little rogue of a lacquey.

AND. Hullo ! Criquet !

COUN. Leave your Criquet alone, you awkward wench, and call lacquey.

AND. Lacquey, then, and not Criquet, come and speak to Madam. I think he is deaf. Criq . . . lacquey, lacquey.

SCENE VI.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET.

CRI. Did you call ?

COUN. Where were you, you little rogue ?

CRI. In the street, Madam.

COUN. And why in the street ?

CRI. You told me to go outside.

COUN. You are a little jackanapes, my friend ; and you ought to know that outside, as these words are used by persons of quality, means the ante-room. Andrée, remember by-and-by to have this little rogue whipped by my equerry ; he is a little incorrigible fellow.

AND. Who is your equerry, Madam ? Is it Master Charles whom you call that ?

COUN. Hold your tongue stupid that you are : you cannot open your lips without uttering some impertinence. (*To Criquet*). Chairs. (*To Andrée*). And you, light two wax-candles in my silver candlesticks ; it is already getting late. What is the matter, that you look at me so wildly ?

AND. Madam . . .

COUN. Well, Madam ! What is it ?

AND. It is . . .

COUN. Well ?

AND. It is that I have no wax-candles.

COUN. How is this ! you have none ?

AND. No, Madam, unless it be tallow-candles.

COUN. The vulgar wench ! And where are the wax ones which I lately bought ?

AND. I have not seen any since I have been in the house.

COUN. Get out of my sight, insolent hussy. I shall

send you back to your parents. Bring me a glass of water.

SCENE VII.—THE COUNTESS and JULIA, *making mutual ceremonies to sit down.*

COUN. Madam!

JUL. Madam!

COUN. Ah! Madam!

JUL. Ah! Madam!

COUN. Pray, Madam!

JUL. Pray, Madam!

COUN. Oh! Madam!

JUL. Oh! Madam!

COUN. Eh! Madam!

JUL. Eh! Madam.

COUN. Eh, come! Madam.

JUL. Eh, come! Madam!

COUN. I am at home, Madam! We are agreed upon that. Do you take me for a provincial, Madam?

JUL. Heaven forbid, Madam.<sup>1</sup>

SCENE VIII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, *carrying a glass of water*; CRIQUET.

COUN. (*To Andrée*). Go away, you impertinent girl; I drink with a saucer. I tell you that you shall go and get me a saucer to drink with.

AND. Criquet, what is a saucer?

CRI. A saucer?

AND. Yes.

CRI. I know not.

COUN. (*To Andrée*). You do not move?

AND. We know neither of us what a saucer is.

COUN. Then learn that it is a plate whereon to place the glass.

SCENE IX.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN.—There is but one Paris to be well waited upon! You are understood there with the slightest glance.

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<sup>1</sup> Nearly a similar scene is found in *A Criticism on the School for Wives*, Act i., Scene 3 (see Vol. I.), between Climène and Eliza.

SCENE X.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, *bringing a glass of water with a plate on the top*, CRIQUET.

COUN. Well! did I tell you thus, ox-head? You should put the plate underneath.

AND. That is easy enough.

*(Andrée breaks the glass in putting it on the plate.)*

COUN. Well! did you ever see such a blunderer? You shall pay for my glass.

AND. Very well! yes, Madam, I shall pay for it.

COUN. But look at this awkward girl, this country lass, this blockhead, this . . .

AND. *(Making off)*. Really, Madam, if I have to pay for it, I do not want to be scolded.

COUN. Get out of my sight.

SCENE XI.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN. In truth, Madam, it is a strange thing, these small towns! People do not know at all how to behave; and I have just paid two or three visits, where they nearly drove me desperate by the little respect they showed to my rank.

JUL. Where could they have learnt manners? They have made no journey to Paris.

COUN. They could nevertheless learn, if they would listen to people; but the worst is that they pretend to know as much about it as I, who have been two months in Paris, and have seen the whole court.

JUL. What stupid people these!

COUN. They are unbearable with the impertinent equality with which they treat people. For, after all, there must be some subordination in things; and what puts me beside myself, is that a town gentleman, of two days, or of two hundred years' standing, should have the effrontery to say that he is as good a gentleman as my late husband, who lived in the country, who had his pack of hounds, and who took the title of count in all the contracts which he made.

JUL. They live better in Paris, in these hotels, the recollection of which must be so dear. This hotel de Mouhy,

Madam, this hotel de Lyon, this hotel de Hollande, what pleasant places they are !<sup>\*</sup>

COUN. No doubt that there is a great deal of difference between these places, and all these here. We meet there with good society which does not haggle to pay you every attention you could wish. Unless one likes, one needs not get off one's chair ; and, whether one wishes to see the review, or the great ballet of *Psyché*, you are served punctually.

JUL. I think, Madam, that, during your stay in Paris, you must have made many conquests of people of rank.

COUN. You may well believe, Madam, that every one who could be called a court gallant did not fail to come to my apartments, to say soft nothings ; and I keep in my desk their notes, which might show what proposals I have refused ; it is not necessary to tell you their names. You know what I mean by the court gallants.

JUL. I am surprised, Madam, that after all these great names at which I guess, you have been able to come down again to a Mr. Tibaudier, a counsellor at law, and to a Mr. Harpin, a receiver of taxes. The fall is great, I confess ; for, as for your Viscount, though but a country Viscount, he is at any rate a Viscount, and may make a journey to Paris, if he have not already done so : but a counsellor at law, and a receiver of taxes are somewhat inferior lovers for a grand Countess like you.

COUN. They are people whom we conciliate in the provinces for the need we may have of them ; they serve at least to fill up the vacancies of gallantry ; to increase the number of suitors ; and it is well, Madam, not to let one lover be sole master, for fear, that, failing rivals, his love may go to sleep through too much confidence.

JUL. I confess to you, Madam, that there is a marvellous deal to learn by what you say ; your conversation is a school, and every day I get hold of something in it.

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<sup>\*</sup>The name *hôtel* was given to a nobleman's or rich man's town-house as well as to an hotel. The places which Julia mentions are hotels in the English sense of the word.

## SCENE XII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET.

CRI. (*To the Countess*). Here is Jeannot from the counsellor's, who is asking for you, Madam.

COUN. Well! you little rogue, some more of your stupidities. A lacquey who knew his place, would have gone to speak quite low to the young lady attendant, who would have come quietly to whisper into the ear of her mistress: Madam, here is the servant of master so-and-so, who wishes to speak a word to you; to which the mistress would have answered: Let him come in.

## SCENE XIII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, ANDRÉE, CRIQUET, JEANNOT.

CRI. Come in, Jeannot.

COUN. Some more bungling. (*To Jeannot*). What is it, fellow? What have you there?

JEAN. It is the counsellor, Madam, who wishes you a very good day, and before coming here, sends you some pears from his garden, with this little note.

COUN. It is some *bon-chrétien*, which is very nice. Andrée, have them carried to the pantry.

## SCENE XIV.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, CRIQUET, JEANNOT.

COUN. (*Giving some money to Jeannot*). Here, my child, here is something to drink my health with.

JEAN. Oh! no, Madam!

COUN. Take it, I tell you.

JEAN. My master has forbidden me Madam, to take anything from you.

COUN. That does not matter.

JEAN. Pardon me, Madam.

CRI. Eh! take it, Jeannot. If you do not want it, you can give it to me.

COUN. Tell your master that I am obliged to him.

CRI. (*To Jeannot, who is going*). Just give me this.

JEAN. Oh, yes! Do you think I am a fool!

CRI. It is I who made you take it.

JEAN. I should have taken it well enough without you.

COUN. What pleases me in this Mr. Tibaudier is, that he knows how to behave with persons of my rank, and that he is very respectful.

SCENE XV.—THE VISCOUNT, THE COUNTESS, JULIA, CRIQUET.

VIS. Madam, I have come to warn you that the comedy will soon be ready, and that, in a quarter of an hour, we can go into the large room.

COUN. I will have no crush at least. (*To Criquet*). Tell my porter to let no one enter.

VIS. In this case, Madam, I must inform you that I shall abandon the comedy; and I cannot take any pleasure in it, if the company be not numerous. Believe me, that if you wish to amuse yourself well, you should tell your people to let the whole town come in.

COUN. A chair, fellow. (*To the Viscount, after he is seated*). You are come just in time to receive a small sacrifice which I wish to make to you. Look here, it is a note of Mr. Tibaudier, who sends me some pears. I give you permission to read it aloud; I have not seen it yet.

VIS. (*After having read the note to himself*). This note is in capital style, and well merits being listened to. (*He reads*). "*Madam, I could not have made you the present which I send you, if, I gathered as little fruit from my garden as I gather from my love.*"

COUN. This shows you clearly that nothing passes between us.

VIS. "*The pears are not yet very ripe; but they will go all the better with the hardness of your heart, which, by its continuous disdain, does not promise me anything soft.*"<sup>9</sup> Permit me, Madam, without entering upon an enumeration of your perfections and charms, which would betray me in a never-ending progress, to conclude this note by calling your attention to the fact that I am as good a Christian<sup>10</sup> as the pears which I send you, since I return good for evil; which means, Madam, to express myself more intelligibly, that I

<sup>9</sup> The original has *ne me promet pas poires molles*.

<sup>10</sup> These pears were called *bon-chrétien*; the latter word means also Christian; hence the play on words.



*offer you pears of bon-chrétien for choke-pears<sup>11</sup> which your cruelty makes me swallow every day.*

*"Tibaudier, your unworthy slave."*

This, Madam, is a note to preserve.

COUN. There may, perhaps, be some words in it which does not belong to the Academy; but I can read a certain respect in it which pleases me much.

JUL. You are right, Madam; and, at the risk of offending the Viscount, I should love a man who wrote to me in that way.

SCENE XVI.—MR. TIBAUDIER, THE VISCOUNT, THE COUNTESS, JULIA.

COUN. Come here, Mr. Tibaudier; do not fear to come in. Your note has been well received, as well as your pears; and behold this lady pleading for you against your rival.

MR. TIB. I am obliged to her, Madam; and if ever she have a suit before our Court, she shall see that I am not forgetful of the honour she does me, in constituting herself the defender of my flame before your charms.

JUL. You have no need of a defender, Sir, and your cause is a just one.

MR. TIB. This notwithstanding, Madam, a good case has need of aid; and I have cause to fear that I shall see myself supplanted by such a rival, and that the Countess will be circumvented by the rank of the Viscount.

VIS. I had some hope before your note, Mr. Tibaudier; but it makes me fear for my love.

MR. TIB. Madam, these are also two little verselets or couplets which I have composed in your honour and glory.

VIS. Ah! I did not think that Mr. Tibaudier was a poet; and these two little verselets come to settle me!

COUN. He means two strophes. (*To Criquet*). Fellow, hand a chair to Mr. Tibaudier. (*Softly to Criquet, who brings him a chair*). A folding stool, you little animal.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The original has *poire d'angoisse*, an instrument of torture in the form of a pear, which was placed into the mouth of the victim. Upon turning a keg a number of springs thrust forth points of iron, so that it could only be taken out by means of the key.

<sup>12</sup> At Court, the difference of rank was known by the use of arm-chairs, chairs without arms, folding-stools, and foot-stools.

Mr. Tibaudier, place yourself there, and read us your strophes.

MR. TIB.           A lady of quality  
                      Ravishes my soul:  
                      She has beauty,  
                      I have love;  
                      But I blame her  
                      For having pride.

VIS. I am lost after this.

COUN. The first verse is beautiful. A lady of quality.

JUL. I think it is a little too long; but one may take a certain license in uttering a fine thought.

COUN. Let us hear the other strophe.

MR. TIB. I do not know whether you doubt my perfect love:

                      But this I know, that my heart, at each moment,

                      Wishes to leave its melancholy abode,

                      To go, out of respect, and pay its court to yours.

                      After this, however, certain of my affection,

                      And of my fidelity, unique of its kind,

                      You ought in your turn,

                      Contenting yourself by being a countess,

                      To divest yourself in my favour of your tigress skin,

                      Which hides your charms by night as well as by day.

VIS. Here I am supplanted by Mr. Tibaudier.

COUN. Do not try to sneer; for verses made in the provinces, these verses are very beautiful.

VIS. How, Madam, to sneer? Though his rival, I think these verses admirable, and not only call them two strophes, but two epigrams, as good as all those of Martial.

COUN. What! does Martial make verses? I thought he made nothing but gloves.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Martial was a celebrated perfumer and glove-seller of the time, as well as valet to the brother of Louis XIV.

MR. TIB. It is not that Martial, Madam ; it is an author who lived about thirty or forty years ago.<sup>14</sup>

VIS. Mr. Tibaudier has read the authors, as you may hear. But let us go and see, Madam, whether my comedy and my music, with my entries of the ballet may combat in your mind the effect of these two strophes and of the note which we have just read.

COUN. My son the Count ought to be one of the party ; for he arrived this morning from my country-house with his tutor, whom I see inside.

SCENE XVII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT,  
MR. TIBAUDIER, MR. BOBINET, CRIQUET.

COUN. Hullo ! Mr. Bobinet, Mr. Bobinet, just come and show yourself.

MR. BOB. I wish the honourable company good evening.<sup>15</sup> What desires the Countess of Escarbagnas from her very humble servant Bobinet ?

COUN. At what hour, Mr. Bobinet, did you start from Escarbagnas with my son the Count ?

MR. BOB. At a quarter to nine, Madam, as your orders had commanded it to me.

COUN. How fare my two other sons, the Marquis and the Commander ?

MR. BOB. They are, Heaven be praised, Madam, in perfect health.

COUN. Where is the Count ?

MR. BOB. In your beautiful apartment with the alcove, Madam.

COUN. What is he doing, Mr. Bobinet ?

MR. BOB. He is composing an exercise, Madam, which I have just dictated to him upon an epistle of Cicero.

COUN. Fetch him hither, Mr. Bobinet.

MR. BOB. It shall be done, Madam, according to your wishes.

<sup>14</sup> The poet Martial lived from the year 43 to the year 104 ; hence Tibaudier, in correcting the Countess, commits, at least, as great an error.

<sup>15</sup> The original has *je donne le bon vèpres*, a very antiquated and pedantic expression, which at once depicts Mr. Bobinet.

SCENE XVIII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT,  
MR. TIBAUDIER.

VIS. (*To Countess*). This Mr. Bobinet, Madam, has a very learned look ; and I believe that he has some wit.

SCENE XIV.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT,  
THE COUNT, MR. BOBINET, MR. TIBAUDIER.

MR. BOB. Come, come, show that you profit by the lessons that are given you. A bow to all the distinguished company.

COUN. (*Pointing to Julia*). Count, salute this lady ; bow low to the Viscount ; salute the Counsellor.

MR. TIB. I am enchanted, Madam, that you concede me the favour of embracing the Count, your son. One cannot love the trunk, without also loving the branches.

COUN. Good Heaven ! Mr. Tibaudier, what comparison are you employing there ?

JUL. Really, Madam, the Count is altogether charming.

VIS. This is a young gentleman who enters society well.

JUL. Who would have thought, Madame, that you had such a tall child.

COUN. Alas ! when he was born, I was so young that I was still playing with a doll.

JUL. It is your brother, not your son.

COUN. Have at least a care about his education, Mr. Bobinet.

MR. BOB. Madam, I shall overlook nothing to cultivate this young shoot, of which your goodness has done me the honour to confide the training ; and I shall inculcate in him the seeds of virtue.

COUN. Mr. Bobinet, just make him repeat some little gallantry of what you teach him.

MR. BOB. Come, Count, recite your lesson of yesterday morning.

COUNT. *Omne viro soli quod convenit esto verile, Omne viri . . .*

COUN. Fie ! Mr. Bobinet, what nonsense do you teach him there ?<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> There is a play on words here which cannot be explained. The second line, which the Countess does not even allow her son to finish is

MR. BOB. It is Latin, Madam, and the first line of Jean Despautère.<sup>17</sup>

COUN. Good Heaven ! this Jean Despautère is an insolent fellow, and I beg you will teach him some more decent Latin than that.

MR. BOB. If you wish him to finish, Madam, the gloss will explain what it means.

COUN. No, no : it explains itself sufficiently.

SCENE XX.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, MR. TIBAUDIER, THE COUNT, MR. BOBINET, CRIQUET.

CRI. The actors send me to say that they are quite ready.

CRI. Let us take our seats. (*Pointing to Julia*). Mr. Tibaudier, take in this lady.

(*Criquet ranges the chairs on one side of the stage ; the Countess, Julia, and the Viscount sit down ; Mr. Tibaudier places himself at the feet of the Countess.*)

VIS. It is necessary to say that this comedy has been written only to connect together the different pieces of music and dancing of which they wished to compose this entertainment, and that . . .

COUN. Good Heavens ! let us see the affair. We have sufficient sense to understand things.

VIS. Let them begin as quickly as they can, and let them prevent, if possible, any intruder from troubling our entertainment. (*The violins commence an overture*).

SCENE XXI.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, THE COUNT, MR. HARPIN, MR. TIBAUDIER, MR. BOBINET, CRIQUET.

MR. HAR. Zounds ! that is a pretty set out, and I rejoice to see what I do see.

COUN. Hullo ! Mr. Receiver, what do you mean by this

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*Omne viri specie pictum vir dicitur esse*, and both lines mean : "All that suits man alone is of the masculine gender, and so is all that is represented under the figure of a man."

<sup>17</sup> For the grammar of Despautère, see *The Physician in Spite of Himself*, Vol. II., note 25.

behaviour? Do people come to interrupt a comedy in this way?

MR. HAR. Zounds! Madam, I am enchanted with this adventure; and this shows me what I am to believe of you, and the certainty which there is in the grief of your heart, and in the oaths which you have sworn to me of its fidelity.

COUN. But really one does not come to throw oneself in the midst of a comedy, and to trouble an actor who is speaking.<sup>18</sup>

MR. HAR. Eh! the deuce! The real comedy which is performed here, is played by you; and if I do trouble you, I care very little about it.

COUN. Really, you do not know what you are saying.

MR. HAR. Indeed, zounds! Indeed, I know it well enough, zounds! and . . . (*Mr. Bobinet, frightened, runs off, taking the Count with him, followed by Criquet.*)

COUN. Fie, Sir, how nasty it is to swear in that way.

MR. HAR. Eh! Odds bobs! if there be anything nasty, it is not my swearing, but your goings on; and it would be better for you to swear, heads, 'sdeaths, and blood, than to do what you are doing with the Viscount.

VIS. I do not know, Mr. Receiver, of what you have to complain; and if . . .

MR. HAR. (*To the Viscount*). As for you, Sir, I have nothing to say to you. You do well to press your suit, it is natural; I find nothing strange in it, and I ask your pardon if I have interrupted your comedy; but you cannot think it strange that I complain of her behaviour; and we have both reason to act as we are acting.

VIS. I have nothing to say against this, and do not know the causes of complaint which you may have against the Countess of Escarbagnas.

COUN. When one has jealous cares, one ought not to behave in this manner; but to come and complain gently to the person one loves.

<sup>18</sup> It is probable that when this play was represented at Saint-Germain, Mr. Harpin interrupted some part of the *Ballet des ballets*; and even at the Palais Royal, some dialogue was probably spoken. When the *Countess of Escarbagnas* is performed now at the *Comédie-Française* a part of one of Molière's plays is always acted.

MR. HAR. I, complain gently !

COUN. Yes. One does not come to bawl out in a theatre what should be said in private.

MR. HAR. I came, zounds ! expressly ; it is just the place I want ; and I could wish that it were a public stage, to tell with more effect all the truths about you.

COUN. Is there need of making so great a noise about a comedy with which the Viscount entertains me ? You see that Mr. Tibaudier, who loves me, behaves more respectfully than you.

MR. HAR. Mr. Tibaudier behaves as it pleases him : I do not know on what footing Mr. Tibaudier is with you ; but Mr. Tibaudier is not an example for me, and I am not disposed to pay the violins to let others dance.

COUN. But really, Mr. Receiver, you know not what you are saying. One does not act in this manner with ladies of quality ; and they who hear you would think that there was something strange between you and me.

MR. HAR. Eh ! Odds bobs ! Madam, let us drop this nonsense.

COUN. But what then do you mean with your : Let us drop this nonsense ?

MR. HAR. I mean that I find nothing strange in it that you should give way to the merits of the Viscount ; you are not the first woman who plays that sort of character in society, and who has a Receiver after her, whose affection and purse one finds her betray for the first comer who suits her views. But do not think it strange that I am not the dupe of an infidelity so common to the coquettes of the present day, and that I come to assure you before company, that I break off all connection with you, and that Mr. Receiver shall no longer be Mr. Giver to you.

COUN. It is marvellous how hot headed lovers are becoming the fashion ! One sees nothing else on all sides. There, there, Mr. Receiver, drop your anger, and come and take a seat to see the comedy.

MR. HAR. I, zounds ! take a seat ! (*Pointing to Mr. Tibaudier*). Seek your simpletons at your own feet. I leave you, Countess, to the Viscount ; and it is to him that I shall send your letters by-and-by. Now my scene is finished, my part performed. I am the company's servant.

MR. TIB. Mr. Receiver we shall meet each other elsewhere than here; and I shall show you that I can use the sword as well as the pen.<sup>19</sup>

MR. HAR. (*Going*). You are right, Mr. Tibaudier.

COUN. As for me, I am taken aback by this insolence.

VIS. Jealous people, Madam, are like those who lose lawsuits; they have the privilege of saying anything. Let us be silent for the comedy.

SCENE XXII.—THE COUNTESS, JULIA, THE VISCOUNT, MR. TIBAUDIER, JEANNOT.

JEAN. (*To Viscount*.) This is a note, which I have been told to give you.

VIS. (*Reading*). "*In case you have any measures to take, I promptly send you some news. The quarrel between your parents and those of Julia has just been made up: and the condition of this reconciliation, is the marriage of you and her. Good night.*" (*To Julia*). Upon my word, Madam, behold our comedy also finished.

(*The Viscount, the Countess, Julia, and Mr. Tibaudier rise.*)

JUL. Ah! Cléante, what happiness! Could our affection have dared to hope for so happy an issue?

COUN. How now? What does this mean?

VIS. This means, Madam, that I marry Julia; and if you believe me, to render the comedy more complete in all points, you will marry Mr. Tibaudier, and give Miss Andrée to his lacquey, of whom he shall make his valet.

COUN. What! to hoodwink a person of my rank thus?

VIS. It was meant without offence, Madam; comedies require these sorts of things.

COUN. Yes, Mr. Tibaudier, I marry you in order to put the whole world in a rage.

MR. TIB. It is a great honour to me, Madam.

VIS. (*To the Countess*). Permit us, Madam, that while we are getting into a rage we may witness the end of the performance.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The original has *que je suis au poil et à la plume*, a term of the chase applied to dogs which could follow all kinds of game.

<sup>20</sup> These last words prove that there was some part of a play or ballet coming at the end of the *Countess of Escarbagnas*; this was probably the last *intermède* of *Psyché*, so that the spectators might not have become too cloyed with operatic splendours, or with the coarseness of Mr. Harpin.



LES FEMMES SAVANTES.  
COMÉDIE.

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THE LEARNED LADIES.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

(*THE ORIGINAL IN VERSE.*)

MARCH 11TH, 1672.



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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THE comedy, *The Learned Ladies*, was represented on the 11th of March 1672, and performed nineteen times, partly before, and partly after Easter. In this play, Molière aimed not, as in *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, at sketching a temporary folly, and affectation of language and manners, but in giving us characters which exist, with certain modifications, in all ages. Philaminte is the woman who rules her home despotically, wishes to be the queen of a literary meeting to be held at her house, and treats her husband and children as inferior beings. But she is strong-minded, and remains unmoved when she thinks that misfortunes overwhelm her. Bélise, the sister of Chrysale, is of weak intellect, with a very limited amount of brains, and fancies that everybody is in love with her. She is based chiefly upon Hespérie,—a character taken from a comedy by Desmarests, called *The Visionaries*. Armande, the elder daughter of Philaminte, is jealous, vindictive, and hides her evil thoughts under a pretended Platonism. These three ladies are regular "blue stockings," whilst Henriette, the younger daughter, is the model of an honest, sensible, and well-brought-up young lady. Chrysale represents the weak-minded man who thinks he is always leading when, in reality, he is only led, afraid of his wife and of quarrels, and giving way to her, whenever she insists. He thinks he is the master because he talks in a loud voice. Ariste, Martine, and the young lover Clitandre, are also very natural. But the two heroes of the play are Trissotin and Vadius, the first a pedant and a wit, the second a pedant and a scholar; the first full of vanity and jealousy, the second full of pride and *odium scholasticum*; finally, the first anxious for the dowry, and not for the heart, of Henriette, and showing openly his cupidity when he imagines that her parents are ruined.

It is said that Molière wished to put upon the stage the Abbé Cotin and Ménage, in drawing the characters of Trissotin and Vadius. Molière denied the latter delineation, and Ménage himself pretended not to recognize the portrait of Vadius. But as to the Abbé Cotin, no doubt is possible; for the sonnet "On the Ague of the Princess Uranie," and the madrigal "On the Amarant Coach," are taken literally from the works of the Abbé, published in 1663. The Abbé was a fertile rhymester of *rondeaux*, madrigals, riddles, and moreover a fashionable preacher in Paris. Born in 1604, he became chaplain to the king about 1635, and member of the Academy in 1655. He was the intimate friend of Mademoiselle de

Montpensier, who read his riddles to the king and queen, and gravely called himself "The Father of the French riddle." He attacked the *Précieuses*, *Ménage* and *Mademoiselle de Scudéry*, and thought he had found an ally in Molière. He quarrelled also with Boileau, against whom he wrote a *Satire*, and who replied by saying that "He who despises Cotin, does not esteem his king, and has according to Cotin, no belief in God, faith, or law." It is also stated that he had written against Molière; and hence the latter's attack upon him. Cotin died, totally forgotten, in 1681.

I have already given my opinion about the bringing upon the stage of living personages.<sup>1</sup> Let me, however, state that only the ridiculous side of Cotin's character appears to have been portrayed by Molière, but that no one ever applied to the Abbé, the villainous traits of Taris-sotin.

Several English Dramatists appear to have borrowed from this play of Molière.

Thomas Wright, in *The Female Virtuoso*, performed at the Theatre Royal in 1693, has imitated partly Molière's *Learned Ladies*. In the English comedy, the characters of Sir Maurice Meanwell, Mr. Meanwell, Clerimont, Lady Meanwell, Mrs. Lovewitt, and Catchat, correspond to those of Chrysale, Ariste, Clitandre, Philaminte, Armande, Henriette, and Bélise in the French comedy, whilst Sir Maggot Jingle is Trissotin. Lady Meanwell designs however Marianna to marry Witless, an entirely new character, not to be found in the original play. *The Female Virtuoso* was revived at the theatre, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, January 10, 1721, as *No Fools like Wits*, in order to anticipate Cibber's *Refusal*. On the 14th of February 1721, was performed at the theatre Drury Lane, Cibber's *Refusal, or The Ladies' Philosophy*, which is chiefly taken from Molière's *Learned Ladies*. Sir Gilbert Wrangle (Chrysale), becomes a South Sea director, and part of the plot depends on the infatuation of the South Sea scheme. The other characters are like Molière's. This piece ran for no more than six nights.

John Miller, in the *Man of Taste* (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I.,) which was acted at Drury Lane, March 6th, 1735, has borrowed from Molière's *Learned Ladies* the characters of Sir Humphrey and Lady Henpeck; Ariste becomes Freelove, and Clitandre is changed into Harcourt. At the end of Act IV., Miller has somewhat freely imitated the second and third scenes of the act of Molière's play; and then Freelove takes the part of Martin, the servant. The ending is also different in the English and French Comedies.

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<sup>1</sup> See Introductory Notice to the *Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CHRYSALE, *a citizen*.<sup>2</sup>

ARISTE, *his brother*.

CLITANDRE, *Henriette's lover*.

TRISSOTIN, *a wit*.

VADIUS, *a savant*.

LÉPINE, *a lacquey*.

JULIEN, *Vadius' servant*.

A NOTARY.

PHILAMINTE, *Chrysale's wife*.

ARMANDE, } *daughters of Chrysale and of Philaminte.*  
HENRIETTE, }

BÉLISE, *Chrysale's sister*.

MARTINE, *a kitchen maid*.<sup>3</sup>

*Scene.*—PARIS, IN CHRYSALE'S HOUSE.

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<sup>2</sup> Molière played this part. According to the inventory taken after his death, and given by the late M. E. Soulié, his dress consisted of "a jerkin and breeches of black velvet, with flowers, on a dark yellow ground, a waistcoat of violet and gold gauze, adorned with buttons, a gold band, tags, and gloves."

<sup>3</sup> It is said that this small part was played by a servant of Molière, whose name was really Martine.



## THE LEARNED LADIES.

(*LES FEMMES SAVANTES.*)

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### ACT I.

#### SCENE I.—ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

AR. What! the lovely name of maid is a title, sister, of which you wish to abandon the sweet charm? And you dare enjoy the thought of getting married? Can such a vulgar design have entered your head?

HEN. Yes, sister.

AR. Ah! is that yes to be borne? And can it be heard without a heart-ache?

HEN. What can there be in marriage to constrain you, sister . . . ?

AR. Ah! good Heavens! fie!

HEN. How?

AR. Fie! I tell you. Can you not conceive the disgust that such a word inspires, the moment it is heard; with what a strange image one is shocked, on what filthy prospects it leads the thought? Do not you shudder at it, and can you, sister, bring your heart to contemplate the consequences of this word?

HEN. The consequences of this word, when I contemplate them, show me a husband, children, a household; and I see nothing there, to talk rationally, which shocks my imagination and makes me shudder.

AR. Oh Heavens! have such ties aught in them to please you?

HEN. And can one do aught better, at my age, than to attach to one's self, by the title of husband, a man who loves you, and is by you beloved; and procure from a union, dictated by tenderness, the sweet of an innocent life? Has such a well-suited tie no charms?

AR. Good Heavens! what a grovelling mind is yours! What a mean part to play in the world, to imprison yourself within a household, and to get no glimpse of more exciting pleasures than an idolized husband and brats of children! Leave the low pleasures of such things to coarse people, and vulgar persons. To higher objects raise your desires, endeavour to have a taste for more noble pleasures, and treating with contempt the senses and matter, abandon yourself entirely to the mind, as we do. You have our mother as an example before you, who is honoured and called everywhere a learned woman; try, as I do, to prove yourself her daughter. Aspire to the knowledge which is in the family, and feel the sweet charms which the love of study instils into people's hearts. Far from being a submissive slave to the laws of men, wed yourself to Philosophy, sister, which elevates us above the whole human race, and invests reason with sovereign sway, subjecting to her laws the animal part, of which the gross appetite places us on a level with brutes. These are the beautiful desires, the sweet ties, which ought to fill up the moments of our lives; and the anxieties in which I see so many women delight, appear to my eyes the most horrible mean-ness.<sup>4</sup>

HEN. Heaven, whose commands we see to be all-powerful, fits us at our birth for different functions; and every mind is not composed of the stuff cut out to make a philosopher. If yours is apt to soar to the heights of learned speculations, mine, sister, is formed to creep, and to small concerns its weakness confines itself. Let us not disturb the righteous arrangements of Heaven; and let us each follow the promptings of our instincts. Dwell, through the flight of a grand and beautiful genius, in the

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<sup>4</sup> Such arguments were really employed by the *Précieuses*.



lofty regions of philosophy, while my mind, remaining here below, shall taste the earthly bliss of wedlock. Thus, differing in our manner of living, we shall both imitate our mother: you, as regards the soul and noble aspirations; I, as regards the senses and the grosser pleasures; you, in the productions of mind and knowledge; I, sister, in those which are material.

AR. If we pretend to model ourselves upon another person, we should resemble her in her finest parts, and only to cough and spit like her is not at all taking her, sister, for a model.<sup>5</sup>

HEN. But you would not be what you boast yourself to be, if my mother had possessed only those finer parts; and it is well for you, sister, that her noble genius has not always dwelt upon philosophy. Pray, grant me, with some kindness, the meanness to which you owe your being; and, by wishing that I should imitate you, do not suppress some little *savant* who may wish to come into the world.

AR. I perceive that your mind cannot be cured of the foolish infatuation of getting a husband: but let us know, if it pleases you, whom you mean to take: you surely do not intend to take Clitandre?

HEN. And why should it not be so? Is he devoid of merit? Is the choice mean?

AR. No; but it is a dishonest design to endeavour to take away another's conquest; and it is not a fact unknown to the world, that Clitandre has openly sighed after me.

HEN. Yes; but all these sighs are in vain with you, and you do not descend to human weakness; your mind has for ever renounced marriage, and philosophy has all your affection. Therefore, not having any design upon Clitandre, what matters it to you if some one else pretend to him?

AR. This empire which reason holds over the senses does not make us renounce the charms of homage; and we may refuse as a husband a deserving man whom we like to see as an adorer in our train.

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<sup>5</sup> The original has "*Et ce n'est point du tout la prendre pour modèle, ma sœur, que de tousser et de cracher comme elle.*" This was a proverbial expression in Molière's time.

HEN. I have not prevented him from continuing to worship your perfections; and I have but accepted, after your refusal, the offer of the homage of his flame.

AR. But, pray, do you think there is perfect security in the offers of affection from a spited lover? Do you believe that his passion for you is very strong, and that all his affection for me is quite dead in his heart?

HEN. So he tells me, sister; and, for my part, I believe him.

AR. Do not be so credulous, sister; and rather believe, when he says he has left me and loves you, that he does not reflect seriously upon it, and deceives himself.

HEN. I cannot tell; but to cut the matter short, if such be your pleasure, it is very easy to find out the truth: I perceive him coming; and he can give us a full explanation upon the subject.

SCENE II.—CLITANDRE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

HEN. To dispel the doubt in which my sister plunges me, please to explain your feelings, Clitandre, as regards myself and her; bare your heart, and vouchsafe to inform us which of us has the right to pretend to your love.

AR. No, no, I will not impose the rigour of an explanation on your passion; I have a consideration for people, and know how embarrassing must be the constraining effort of these open avowals.

CLI. No, Madam; my heart, which dissimulates little, feels no constraint to make a frank avowal. Such a step throws me into no confusion; and I will confess openly, frankly, and fearlessly, that the bonds which hold me captive, my love and my affection, are all on this side (*Pointing to Henriette*). Let not this avowal disturb you; you yourself would have it so. Your attractions had caught me, and my tender sighs sufficiently proved to you the ardour of my desires, my heart burned for you with a steadfast flame: but your eyes did not think their conquest sufficiently beautiful. I have borne a hundred various insults under their yoke; they swayed my heart like proud tyrants; and I sought for myself, wearied with so much trouble, conquerors more humane, and chains less galling. (*Pointing to Henriette*). I have met them, Madam, in those

eyes, and their glances are forever precious to me; by one pitying look they have dried my tears, and did not disdain what your charms rejected. Such rare kindness has had the effect of so moving me, that there is nought that could make me throw off my fetters; and I dare now beseech you, Madam, to make no attempt to regain my love, nor to try to call back a heart resolved to die in this sweet transport.

AR. Pray, Sir, who tells you that I have such a wish, and that I am so strongly concerned about you? I think it amusing of you to imagine such a thing, and very impertinent to declare it to me.<sup>6</sup>

HEN. Eh! gently, sister. Where then is that morality, which knows so well to control the animal parts, and to keep the reins tight on anger's promptings?

AR. But you who speak of morality, where do you practise it, when you respond to the passion which is shown to you without the leave of those who have given you birth? Know that duty subjects you to their laws; that you are not allowed to love except through their choice; that they possess supreme authority over your heart, and that it is criminal to dispose of it yourself.

HEN. I acknowledge the kindness you show me in teaching me so well matters connected with duty. My heart shall regulate its conduct according to your lessons; and to show you, sister, that I profit by them, Clitandre, have a care to support your love by the consent of those who gave me birth. Obtain a legitimate power over my affection, so that I may love you without crime.

CLI. I am going to do so openly, and with all my might; and I was only waiting for this sweet consent.

AR. You triumph, sister, and look as if you imagined that this vexes me.

HEN. I, sister! not at all. I know that the dictates of reason are always all-powerful over your senses, and that through the teachings drawn from wisdom's source you are above such weaknesses. Far from suspecting you of such vexation, I think that in this case you will bestir yourself

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<sup>6</sup> The same declaration takes place in *The Misanthrope*, Act v., Scene 6 (see Vol. II.); and in *Psyche*, Act I., Scene 3.

for me, second his demand, and, by your suffrage, accelerate the happy moment of our marriage. I entreat you to do so and to work at it . . .

AR. Your small wit pretends to jest; and we behold you quite proud of a heart that is thrown at you.

HEN. Much as this heart may be thrown, it would not at all displease you; and if your eyes could pick it up from before me, they would easily take the trouble to stoop.

AR. I do not deign to condescend to answer this; and it is silly prattle which ought not to be listened to.

HEN. That is very well on your part, and you show us a moderation which can hardly be conceived.

SCENE III.—CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE.

HEN. Your sincere avowal has surprised her not a little.

CLI. She sufficiently merits such frankness, and all the haughtiness of her foolish pride is, at least, worthy of my sincerity. But since you have allowed me, I am going to your father, Madam . . .

HEN. The surest way is to gain over my mother. My father is of a disposition to consent to everything; but he attaches little weight to his resolutions; he has received from Heaven a certain kindness of heart which instantly subjects him to the will of his wife. It is she who governs and absolutely makes her pleasure law. I should wish much to see you a little more complaisant, I confess it, to her and to my aunt, of a disposition which, while flattering their ideas, might attract the warmth of their esteem.

CLI. My heart, with its innate sincerity, never could flatter their character even in your sister; and learned women are not at all to my taste. I admit that a woman may be enlightened upon everything: but I do not wish to behold the unseemly passion of making her learned in order to become learned; and I like that she should, when questioned, often pretend to be ignorant of the things which she knows; in short, I wish her to hide her studying; to have knowledge without wishing it to be known, without quoting authors, without using grand words, and being witty on the least opportunity. I much respect your mother; but I cannot approve of her whims,

and constitute myself the echo of all the incense which she wafts to her hero for wit. Her Mr. Trissotin annoys and wearies me; and it makes me angry to find her esteem such a man; that she should rank among men of great and fine mind, a booby whose writings are everywhere damned; a pedant whose copious pen furnishes the whole market with waste paper.

HEN. His writings, his speeches, everything from him seems tiresome, and I agree in a great measure with your taste and views; but, as he has much influence with my mother, you must constrain yourself to be somewhat complaisant to him. A lover pays his court where his heart has taken root; he aims at gaining every one's favour in that spot; and so as to have no one opposed to his flame, he endeavours to please the very house-dog.<sup>7</sup>

CLI. Yes, you are right; but Mr. Trissotin inspires me from the bottom of my soul with a dislike which prevails over everything. I cannot consent, to gain his suffrages, to dishonour myself by praising his works. It is through them that he first appeared to my sight, and I knew him before I had seen him. I perceived in the trashy writings which he gives us what his pedantic person displays in every spot, the constant height of his presumption, his intrepid good opinion of himself, the indolent state of extreme confidence which renders him at all times so satisfied with himself, which makes him smile incessantly at his own merit, which makes him congratulate himself upon everything that he writes, and which renders him unwilling to exchange his reputation for all the honours of the general of an army.

HEN. One must be sharp-sighted to perceive all this.

CLI. It went even so far as his figure; and I saw by the verses which he throws at our heads how the poet was shaped: and so well had I guessed every trait of him, that, meeting in the Palais<sup>8</sup> one day a man, I laid a wager that it was Trissotin in person, as indeed it was.

HEN. What a story!

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<sup>7</sup> This is partly taken from Plautus' *Asinaria*.

<sup>8</sup> The *Palais* stands for the *Palais de Justice*, of which the galleries were crowded with shops, much frequented in Molière's time. A comedy of Corneille, called *The Gallery of the Palace*, was represented in 1634.

CLI. No ; I tell the thing as it happened. But I perceive your aunt. Permit me, pray, in this spot to reveal our secret to her, and endeavour to gain her over to intercede with your mother.

SCENE IV.—BÉLISE, CLITANDRE.

CLI. Allow a lover, Madam, to take advantage of this happy moment, to speak to you, and to reveal to you the sincere flame . . .

BEL. Ah ! gently ; be careful not to bare your soul too much. If I have enrolled you in the ranks of my lovers, content yourself with letting your eyes be the sole interpreters, and do not explain to me, in another language, those desires which with me pass for an outrage. Love me, sigh, burn for my charms ; but allow me not to know it. I may shut my eyes to your secret flame as long as you confine yourself to dumb interpreters ; but if the mouth presume to meddle with it, I must banish you for ever from my sight.\*

CLI. Do not take alarm at the projects of my heart. Henriette, Madam, is the object which charms me ; and I ardently beseech your kindness to second the love inspired by her beauty.

BEL. Ah ! certainly, the turn is witty, I must confess. This subtle subterfuge deserves to be praised ; and in all the novels which I have read I have met with nothing more ingenious.

CLI. It is not at all a stroke of wit, Madam ; but it is a frank avowal of the feelings of my heart. Heaven, by the bonds of immutable ardour, has fettered me to the beauties of Henriette ; Henriette holds me 'neath her gentle empire, and a marriage with Henriette is the bliss to which I aspire. You have much influence ; and all I wish is that you would deign to favour my affection.

BEL. I perceive what this demand is gently aiming at, and I know what I am to understand under that name. The figure of speech is clever ; and, not to change it, instead of the things which my heart prompts me to answer

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\* Bélise speaks like a regular *Précieuse*.

you, I shall say that Henriette is opposed to wedlock, and that without claiming aught you must burn for her.

CLI. Ah ! Madam, why such confusion ? and why will you imagine what has no existence ?

BEL. Good Heavens ! no compliments. Cease to gain-say what your looks have often given me to understand. It suffices that we are satisfied with the subterfuge of which your love adroitly bethought itself, and that underneath the figure which respect obliges you to use, we are good enough to suffer your homage, provided its transports, enlightened by honour, offer naught but refined vows on my altar.

CLI. But . . .

BEL. Farewell. This ought to suffice you for once, and I have said more to you than I wished to say.

CLI. But your mistake . . .

BEL. Enough ; I now blush, and my modesty has made a surprising effort.

CLI. I will be hanged if I love you ; and prudent . . .

BEL. No, no, I shall hear no more.<sup>10</sup>

#### SCENE V.—CLITANDRE, *alone*.

The deuce take the foolish woman with her fancies ! Has the like madness ever been seen ? Let us go and entrust some one else with this affair, and take the advice of some clever person.<sup>11</sup>

### ACT II.

#### SCENE I.—ARISTE, *leaving Clitandre, but still speaking to him*.

Yes, I shall take you the answer as soon as possible ; I shall insist, and press, and do all that is necessary. What a deal a lover has to say that could be said in one word ! And how impatiently he wishes what he desires ! Never . . .

<sup>10</sup> The character of Bélise is partly taken from that of Hespérie in the comedy, *The Visionaries* of Desmarests, which greatly amused Louis XIV. Thomas Corneille had already imitated the character of Hespérie, in *The Baron of Albikrac*, performed four years before *The Learned Ladies*.

<sup>11</sup> This is the only monologue in *The Learned Ladies*.

## SCENE II.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE.

AR. Ah ! Heaven guard you, brother !

CH. And you also, brother !

AR. Do you know what brings me here ?

CH. No ; but if you wish, I am ready to hear it.

AR. You know Clitandre sufficiently long ?

CH. No doubt, and I see him at our house.

AR. In what esteem do you hold him, brother ?

CH. As a man of honour, of wit, of courage, and well-behaved : I see few people who are so deserving.

AR. A certain wish of his brings me hither, and I am glad that you set store by him.

CH. I knew his late father in my journey to Rome.

AR. Very well.

CH. He was a sterling gentleman, brother.

AR. So they say.

CH. We were but eight-and-twenty at that time, and, on my word, we were a couple of brisk young fellows.

AR. I can well believe it.

CH. We were very well with the Roman ladies, and every one there spoke of our pranks : we caused some jealousies.

AR. Nothing could be better. But let us come to the subject which brings me hither,

↓ SCENE III.—BÉLISE, *entering softly and listening* ;  
CHRYSALE, ARISTE.

AR. Clitandre makes me his spokesman with you, and his heart is smitten with the charms of Henriette.

CH. What ! of my daughter ?

AR. Yes ; he is bewitched by her, and I never saw a more fervid lover.

BEL. (*To Ariste*). No, no ; I hear you. You are ignorant of the story ; and the matter is not as you believe it to be.

AR. How, sister ?

BEL. Clitandre abuses your minds ; and it is of another object that his heart is enamoured.

AR. You are jesting. It is not Henriette whom he loves ?



BEL. No ; I am certain of it.

AR. He has told me so himself.

BEL. Eh ! yes.

AR. You behold me, sister, commissioned by him to ask her from her father this day.

BEL. Very good.

AR. And his very love has urged me to hasten the moment of such an alliance.

BEL. Better still. One cannot deceive more gallantly. Henriette, among ourselves, is an amusement, an ingenious screen, a pretext, brother, to hide another flame, the mystery of which I know ; and I wish to disabuse you both of your error.

AR. But since you know so many things, sister, tell us, pray, who is this other object whom he loves.

BEL. You wish to know it ?

AR. Yes, what of it ?

BEL. Me !

AR. You ?

BEL. Myself.

AR. Eh, sister !

BEL. What is the meaning of this Eh ? and what is there surprising in what I say ? One is handsome enough, I imagine, to be able to say that it is not one heart only which is subject to our empire ; and Dorante, Damis, Cléonte, and Lycidas may show that we have some charms,

AR. These gentlemen love you ?

BEL. Yes, with all their might.

AR. They have told you so ?

BEL. No one has taken that liberty ; they have so well known to reverence me up to this day, that they never breathed a word of their love. But to offer me their hearts and to devote themselves to my services, dumb interpreters have sufficiently done their office.

AR. We hardly ever see Damis come into the house.

BEL. It is to show me a more submissive respect.

AR. With stinging words, Dorante insults you everywhere.

BEL. They are the transports of a jealous rage.

AR. Cléonte and Lycidas have both taken wives to themselves.

BEL. It is through the despair to which I have reduced their flames.

AR. Upon my word, dear sister, pure fancies.

CH. (*To Bélise*). You ought to divest yourself of those fancies.

BEL. Ah! Fancies! they are fancies, you say. Fancies, I! Really, fancies is very good; I am very happy in having fancies, brothers, and I did not know that I had any fancies.

SCENE IV.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE.

CH. Yes, our sister is mad.

AR. It is growing day by day. But let us resume our conversation once more. Clitandre asks you to give him Henriette as a wife. See what answer is to be made to his flame.

CH. Is there need to ask? I consent with all my heart, and consider it a great honour to be allied to him.

AR. You know that he has no great abundance of worldly goods . . .

CH. That is a consideration of but small importance; he is rich in virtues; that is worth treasures; and besides his father and I were but one soul in two bodies.

AR. Let us speak to your wife, and endeavour to render her favourable . . .

CH. It suffices; I accept him for a son-in-law.

AR. Yes; but to strengthen your consent, brother, it would do no harm to have her permission. Let us go. . . .

CH. Are you jesting? There is no need. I answer for my wife, and take the matter upon myself.

AR. But . . .

CH. Leave it to me, I tell you, and be under no apprehension. I am going to prepare her immediately.

AR. Be it so. I am going to sound your Henriette upon this, and shall come back to know. . . .

CH. The business is concluded; and I am going to speak to my wife without delay.

SCENE V.—CHRYSALE, MARTINE.

MAR. Just like my luck! Alas! it is a true saying;

give a dog a bad name, and hang him;<sup>13</sup> and service to another is no inheritance.

CH. What is the matter? What ails you, Martine?

MAR. What ails me?

CH. Yes.

MAR. What ails me is that they have discharged me to-day, Sir.

CH. Discharged!

MAR. Yes. Madam sends me away.

CH. I do not understand this. How?

MAR. I am threatened with a hundred blows, if I do not leave this.

CH. No, you shall stay; I am satisfied with you. My wife is at times somewhat hot-headed; and I will not, I . . .

SCENE VI.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, CHRYSALE, MARTINE.

PHIL. (*Perceiving Martine*). What! I still find you, you booby. Quick, out with you, jade; come, leave the place, and never show yourself in my sight.

CH. Gently.

PHIL. No, there is an end of it.

CH. Eh!

PHIL. I wish her to go.

CH. But what has she done, to insist in this manner. . .

PHIL. What! you back her up?

CH. In no way.

PHIL. Do you take her part against me?

CH. Good Heavens! no; I am simply asking her crime.

PHIL. Am I likely to send her away without a legitimate cause?

CH. I do not say that; but it is right that our people should . . .

PHIL. No; she shall leave this, I tell you.

CH. Well! yes. Does any one say aught against it?

PHIL. I will have no opposition to my wishes.

CH. Agreed.

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<sup>13</sup> The original has *qui veut noyer son chien l'accuse de la rage*, he who wants to drown his dog accuses him of being mad.

PHIL. And you ought, as a sensible husband, to be with me against her, and share my anger.

CH. (*Turning to Martine*). So I do. Yes, my wife is right in sending you away, you jade, and your crime deserves no mercy.

MAR. But what have I done then?

CH. (*Softly*). Upon my word, I do not know.

PHIL. What is more, she is disposed to make very light of it.

CH. Has she broken some mirror or piece of porcelain, that you are so incensed against her?

PHIL. Should I send her away? and do you imagine that I should put myself in a temper for such a trifle?

CH. (*To Martine*). What does it mean? (*To Philaminte*). The matter is of importance, then?

PHIL. Undoubtedly. Have I ever been found an unreasonable woman!

CH. Has she, through a spirit of negligence, allowed some ewer or silver platter to be stolen?

PHIL. That would be nothing.

CH. (*To Martine*). Oh! oh! the deuce, good woman. (*To Philaminte*). What! Have you surprised her in being dishonest?

PHIL. It is worse than all that.

CH. Worse than all that.

PHIL. Worse.

CH. (*To Martine*). How! the deuce, you jade! (*To Philaminte*). Eh! Has she committed . . .

PHIL. She has, with all the matchless insolence, after thirty lessons, shocked my ear by the impropriety of a low and vulgar word, which Vaugelas<sup>18</sup> condemns in decisive terms.

CH. Is that the . . .

PHIL. What! always, notwithstanding our remonstrances, to be upsetting the foundation of all sciences, grammar, which knows how to control even kings, and makes them, with a high hand obey its laws!

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<sup>18</sup> Vaugelas, who died in 1650, that is twenty-two years before *The Learned Ladies* was performed, was a celebrated grammarian, who wrote *Remarks on the French Language*. He is mentioned five times in Molière's comedy.

CH. I thought her guilty of the most serious misbehaviour.

PHIL. What! you do not think this crime unpardonable?

CH. Indeed.

PHIL. I should like to see you condone her!

CH. I do not think of it.

BEL. It is true that these are pitiful things. All construing is destroyed by her, and in the laws of language she has been instructed a hundred times.

MAR. All that you preach is, I believe, well and good; but as for me I shall never know how to speak your gibberish.

PHIL. The impudent girl! to call gibberish a language founded on reason and on elegant custom.

MAR. We always speak well when we make ourselves understood, and all your beautiful diction does not serve for nothing.

PHIL. Well! is that not another sample of her style? *does not serve for nothing!*

BEL. O indocile brain! With all the cares which we are incessantly taking, can we not teach you to speak congruously. In joining *not* to *nothing* you make a repetition, and there is, as you have been told, a negative too much.

MAR. Good Heavens! I have<sup>14</sup> not studied like you, and I speak straight out as they speak our way.

PHIL. Ah! is it to be borne?

BEL. What horrible solecism!

PHIL. It is enough to kill a sensitive ear.

BEL. Your mind must be very material, I confess. *I* is but a singular, while *have* in this case is a plural. Are you to offend against grammar all your life?

MAR. Who says anything about offending grandmother or grandfather either?<sup>15</sup>

PHIL. O Heavens!

BEL. Grammar is taken in the wrong sense by you, and I have already told you where the word comes from.

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<sup>14</sup> The original is *je avons*.

<sup>15</sup> A play on the word *grammaire*, grammar; and *grand'mère*, grandmother.

MAR. Upon my word ! it may come from Chaillot, Auteuil, or Pontoise, for all it matters to me.

BEL. What a loutish soul ! Grammar teaches us the laws of the verb and of the nominative, as well as of the adjective in connection with the substantive.

MAR. All I have to say, Madam, is that I do not know these people.

PHIL. What a martyrdom !

BEL. They are the names of words ; and one has to consider how they have to be made to agree together.

MAR. They may agree together, or tear each other to pieces, for what I care.<sup>16</sup>

PHIL. (*To Bélise*). Eh ! Good Heavens ! Finish this conversation. (*To Chrysale*). You will not, you, make her leave ?

CH. Yes, indeed. (*Aside*). I must give way to her whim. Go, do not irritate her ; retire, Martine.

PHIL. What ! You are afraid to offend the hussey ! You speak to her in quite an obliging tone !

CH. I ? Not at all. (*In a firm tone*). Come, you must go. (*In a more gentle tone*). Go, my poor child.

#### SCENE VII.—PHILAMINTE, CHRYSALE, BÉLISE.

CH. You are satisfied, and behold her gone ; but I do not at all approve of her being turned away. She is a girl who does her duty well, and you discard her for a trifling cause.

PHIL. Do you wish me to have her always in my service, to put my ears incessantly to the torture, to break every rule of custom and reason by a barbarous heap of errors in speech, mutilated words linked together, at intervals, by proverbs found in the gutters of the *Halles* ?<sup>17</sup>

BEL. It is true that it makes one hot to have to bear her conversations ; she tears Vaugelas to shreds every day ; and the least faults of this coarse mind are either a pleonasm, or cacophony.

CH. What does it matter that she fails in the laws of

<sup>16</sup> This is partly taken from a comedy by Larivey, *le Fidèle*.

<sup>17</sup> The *Halles* are the markets : hence these proverbs are something like Billingsgate language.

Vaugelas, provided she does not fail in the cooking? I would rather, I would, that in cleaning the vegetables she should make the verbs agree ill with the nouns, and say a hundred times a low or bad word, than that she should burn my meat or put too much salt in my soup; I live on good soup, and not on fine language. Vaugelas does not teach how to make a good soup, and Malherbe and Balzac, so learned in fine words, in cookery would perhaps have been real ninnies.

PHIL. How horribly this coarse conversation shocks one. And what indignity for him who calls himself a man to be for ever grovelling in material cares, instead of elevating himself to the spiritual! Is this body of ours, this rag, of sufficient importance, or valuable enough, to deserve that we should even think about it? And ought we not to put these things far from us?

CH. Yes, my body is myself, and I mean to take care of it. You may call it rag if you will, but my rag is dear to me.

BEL. The body with the mind is something, brother; but if you are to believe the whole of the learned world, the mind ought to take precedence of the body; and our greatest care, our first effort, ought to be to nourish it with the juice of science.

CH. Upon my word, if you wish to nourish your mind, it is with very empty ideas, according to what every one says, and you need have no care, no solicitude, to . . .

PHIL. Ah! *solicitude* sounds very roughly to my ear; it smacks strangely of its age.

BEL. It is true that the word is very old-fashioned.<sup>18</sup>

CH. Do you wish me to tell you? I shall have to burst out at last, take off the mask, and give way to my choler. You are called fools, and I take it much to heart . . .

PHIL. What now?

CH. (*To Bélise*). It is to you I am speaking, sister.

<sup>18</sup> The original has *le mot est bien collet monté*. A *collet monté* was an old-fashioned ruff, in which pasteboard and wire were used to hold it up; therefore *Bélise* intends probably to say that the word "*solicitude*" was very old-fashioned. *Collet monté*, in speaking of persons, was generally used to denote people of either stilted, or also of those of staid and serious behaviour.

The least solecism in speech irritates you ; but you commit some strange ones in your conduct. Your everlasting books do not satisfy me ; and, with the exception of a large Plutarch to put my bands in <sup>19</sup> you ought to burn the whole of this useless trumpery, and leave science to the professors in town ; to do right, you should remove from the garret that long spyglass which frightens people, and a thousand other trifles, the sight of which annoys ; not try to find out what they are doing in the moon, and interest yourself a little more in what is being done at home, where we find everything going topsy-turvy. It is not very proper, and for several reasons, that a woman should study and know so many things. To train the minds of her children in good morals and manners, to superintend her household by keeping an eye on her servants, and to control the expenditure with economy, ought to be her study and philosophy. Our fathers, on this point, were very sensible, who said that a woman always knows enough as long as her mind rises to the level of knowing a doublet from a pair of breeches. Theirs did not read much, but they led a good life ; their households were all their learned occupations ; and their library, a thimble, thread, and needles, with which they worked at the outfit of their daughters. The women of the present age are far removed from these manners ; they wish to write and become authors. No science is too deep for them, and in this house more than in any other spot in this world ; the loftiest secrets are pried into, and everything is known in my home, except what ought to be known. They know the motions of the moon and the polar star, of Venus, of Saturn, and of Mars, with which I have no concern ; and in this vain learning, which is so far-fetched, my food, of which I stand so much in need, is neglected. My servants aspire to science in order to please you, and all neglect nothing so much as what they have to do. To argue is the occupation of the whole of my household, and argument banishes reason from it. The one burns my roast,

<sup>19</sup> As the bands were starched and had to be kept straight, they were often put between the leaves of a big book, generally a folio. In the inventory taken after the death of Molière's mother, and in the one taken after his own death, there was a copy of Plutarch's works.



while reading some history ; the other dreams of verses, while I am asking for something to drink. In short, I see your example followed by them, and though I have servants, I am not served. One poor servant girl at least remained to me, whom this bad air had not infected, and behold her turned out with a great ado, because she fails to speak according to Vaugelas. I tell you, sister, that all these doings annoy me ; for it is to you, as I have told you, that I address myself. I do not care about all your people with their Latin in my house, and above all this Mr. Trissotin ; it is he, who with his verses, has made you ridiculous : all his talk is so much foolish trash. One has to look for what he has said after he has spoken ; and as for me, I believe him to be a little cracked.

PHIL. O Heavens ! what baseness of soul and language !

BEL. Can there be in a small body a more grovelling aggregate, a mind composed of more vulgar atoms ? And can I be of the same blood ? I mortally hate myself for belonging to your family ; and I quit the place in confusion.

SCENE VIII.—PHILAMINTE, CHRYSALE.

PHIL. Have you yet some other dart to level at me ?

CH. I ? No. Let us quarrel no longer ; it is over. Let us discourse of another matter. In your eldest daughter we perceive some aversion to the hymeneal knot ; she is in short a philosopher. I say nothing about it ; she is well ruled, and you act very well. But her younger sister is of quite a different disposition ; and I believe we should do well to provide and to choose for Henriette a husband . . .

PHIL. I have thought about it, and I shall communicate to you my intention. This Mr. Trissotin, who is so railed at, and who has not the honour of possessing your esteem, is the one whom I consider to be the husband that would suit her ; and I am a better judge of his merits than you are. To argue in this case is superfluous ; and my mind in this matter is quite made up. At least do not say a word about the choice of this husband ; I wish to speak to your daughter about it before you. I have rea-

sons to make my conduct approved of, and I shall know well enough if you have informed her.

SCENE IX.—ARISTE, CHRYSALE.

ARIS. Well! brother, your wife has left this moment, and I perceive quite well that you had just some conversation together.

CH. Yes.

ARIS. And with what success? Shall we have Henriette? Has she consented? Is the affair concluded?

CH. Not quite as yet.

ARIS. Does she refuse?

CH. No.

ARIS. Does she waver?

CH. In no way.

ARIS. What then?

CH. She proposes some one else for my son-in-law.

ARIS. Some one else for your son-in-law?

CH. Some one else.

ARIS. Whose name is . . .

CH. Mr. Trissotin.

ARIS. What! this Mr. Trissotin. . . .

CH. Yes, who is always talking verses and Latin.

ARIS. Have you accepted him?

CH. I, not all: Heaven forbid!

ARIS. What answer have you made?

CH. None; and right glad I am not to have spoken, so as not to bind myself.

ARIS. The reason is very nice; and you have taken a great step! Have you at least proposed Clitandre to her?

CH. No; for as I saw that there was a question of another son-in-law, I thought it better to let it alone.

ARIS. Certainly, your prudence is excessively rare. Are you not ashamed of your want of firmness? And is it possible for a man to be so weak as to leave his wife absolute power, and not dare to attack what she has resolved upon?

CH. Good Heavens! brother, you speak very easily of it, but you do not know how noise troubles me. I am very fond of rest, peace, and tranquillity, and my wife is terrible in her tempers. She greatly considers the name

of philosopher, but she is none the less choleric; and her morality, which affects to despise wealth, does not operate in the least on the sting of her anger. If in the slightest matter you oppose her will, a terrible tempest rages for a week afterwards. She makes me tremble the moment she assumes that tone; I do not know where to hide myself, for she is such a dragon; and nevertheless, with all her devilry, I am obliged to call her my heart and my love.<sup>20</sup>

ARIS. Come, this is mere jest. Between ourselves, your wife has mastered you through your cowardice. Her power is based only on your weakness; it is from you that she takes the title of mistress; you allow yourself to give way to her haughtiness, and are led by the nose like a fool. What! cannot you, seeing what you are called, make up your mind for once to become a man, to bring down a woman to your wishes, and take sufficient courage to say, I will have it so! You will, without shame, allow your daughter to be sacrificed to the silly visions which are holding your family in bondage, and endow a booby with all your wealth in return for six words of Latin, which he spouts to them; a pedant, whom your wife at every turn addresses as a man of wit and a great philosopher, as a man who, in gallant poetry, never had his equal, and who is nothing of the sort, as every one knows. Come, once more, it is a jest; and your cowardice deserves to be laughed at.

CH. Yes, you are right, and I see that I am wrong. Come, I must at last show a firmer mind, brother.

ARIS. That is well said.

CH. It is an infamous thing to be thus under the sway of a woman.

ARIS. Very good.

CH. She has taken too great an advantage of my softness.

ARIS. It is true.

CH. Too much imposed upon my easy-going nature.

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<sup>20</sup> These last words are an imitation of Plautus' *Casina*, or the *Stratagem Defeated* (Act ii., Scene 3), when Stalino, on seeing his wife Cleostrata, says: "I espy her standing there in gloominess. This plaguy baggage must be addressed by me with civility. (*Going towards her*). My own wife and my delight, what are you about?"

ARIS. Undoubtedly.

CH. And I will have her know this very day that my daughter is my daughter, and that I am the master, to take for her a husband who pleases me.

ARIS. Now you are reasonable, and as I wish you to be.

CH. You are for Clitandre, and know his address ; send him to me, brother, presently.

ARIS. I am going there directly.

CH. I have borne it too long, and I am going to be a man in spite of every one.

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### ACT III.

SCENE I.—PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

PHIL. Ah ! let us seat ourselves here to listen at our ease to these verses which should be weighed word by word.

AR. I am burning to see them.

BEL. And we are dying for them.

PHIL. (*To Trisstoin*). Whatever comes from you has a charm for me.

AR. To me it is a matchless sweetness.

BEL. It is a dainty repast provided for my ears.

PHIL. Do not prolong such pressing desires.

AR. Pray hurry.

BEL. Be quick, and hasten our pleasures.

PHIL. Offer your epigram to our impatience.

TRIS. (*To Philaminte*). Alas ! it is but a new-born child, Madam : its fate may surely interest you ; and it is in your courtyard that I have been delivered of it.

PHIL. Its father is sufficient to make it dear to me.

TRIS. Your approbation may serve it as a mother.

BEL. What wit he has !

SCENE II.—HENRIETTE, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

PHIL. (*To Henriette, who is about to withdraw*). Hullo ! why do you run away ?

HEN. It is for fear of disturbing so sweet a conversation.

PHIL. Draw near, and come, intently, to take part in pleasure of hearing some marvels.

HEN. I know but little of the beauties of the people's writings, and things of wit are beyond me.

PHIL. It matters not. Afterwards, I have also to tell you a secret, of which it would be as well that you were informed.

TRIS. (*To Henriette*). Science has nothing that can inflame you, and your only pride is to know how to charm.

HEN. The one as little as the other; and I have not the least desire . . .

BEL. Come! let us see to the new-born child, pray.

PHIL. (*To Lépine*). Come, lad, quick, the wherewithal to seat ourselves. (*Lépine tumbles down*). Look at the awkward fellow! Ought people to fall after they have learned the equilibrium of things?

BEL. Do not you see the causes of your fall, Ignoramus, and that it proceeded from your deviation from the fixed point which we call the centre of gravity.

LEP. I became aware of it, Madam, when I was on the ground.

PHIL. (*To Lépine, who goes out*). The awkward booby!

TRIS. Well for him he was not made of glass.

AR. Ah! wit everywhere!

BEL. It never lags.

(*They sit down.*)

PHIL. Now promptly dish us up your amiable repast.

TRIS. For such great hunger as is shown to me, a dish of only eight verses seems very little; and I think that I shall do no harm here in joining to the epigram, or to the madrigal, the relish of a sonnet, which a certain princess thought rather delicate. It is seasoned with attic salt throughout, and I believe you will find it of sufficiently good taste.

AR. Ah! I do not doubt it.

PHIL. Let us give ear immediately.

BEL. (*Interrupting Trissotin each time he is ready to begin*). I feel my heart beat with pleasure beforehand. I love poetry to distraction, and especially when the verses are gallantly turned.

PHIL. If we are always speaking, he cannot say anything.

TRIS. *A son . . .*

BEL. (*To Henriette*). Silence, niece.<sup>21</sup>

TRIS. *A sonnet to the Princess Uranie, on her Ague.*<sup>22</sup>

*Your prudence surely is asleep,  
To treat and sumptuously to keep,  
To lodge in state and luxury,  
Your most hard-hearted enemy.*

BEL. Ah! what a charming beginning!

AR. How prettily he turns things!

PHIL. He alone possesses the talent for easy verses.

AR. *To prudence asleep* we must yield up our arms.

BEL. *To lodge an enemy* is for me full of charms.

PHIL. I like *sumptuously* and *state and luxury*, the joining of these last words does admirably.

BEL. Let us listen to the rest.

TRIS. *Your prudence surely is asleep,  
To treat and sumptuously to keep,  
To lodge in state and luxury,  
Your most hard-hearted enemy.*

AR. *Prudence asleep!*

BEL. *To lodge an enemy!*

PHIL. *Sumptuously, and state and luxury!*

TRIS. *Whate'er be said, drive it away,  
From 'neath your roof's splendid array,  
Expel the ungrateful wretch, who would  
Attack a life so fair, so good.*

BEL. Ah! gently; let me take breath, pray.

AR. Give us leisure to admire, if you please.

PHIL. One feels, at these verses, running at the bottom of one's heart, a something, I do not know what, that makes one feel faint.

AR. *Whate'er be said, drive it away,  
From 'neath your roof's splendid array.*

How elegantly is *'neath your roof's splendid array* expressed; and how wittily the metaphor is put!

PHIL. *Whate'er be said, drive it away!* Ah! what an

<sup>21</sup> Henriette has been saying nothing, yet Bélise, who talks continually, says "Silence."

<sup>22</sup> This sonnet is to be found in *The Gallant Works, in prose and in verse, of Mr. Cotin*, Paris, 1663, and is called, *A Sonnet to Mademoiselle de Longueville, now Duchess of Nemours, on her quartan ague.*

admirable taste is displayed in this *drive it away*. This, in my opinion, is an invaluable passage.

AR. My heart is likewise smitten with *whate'er be said*.

BEL. I am of your opinion, *whate'er be said* is a happy expression.

AR. I would like to have written it.

BEL. It is worth a whole piece.

PHIL. But is the *finesse* of it really understood, as I do?

AR. AND BEL. Oh! oh!

PHIL. *Whate'er be said, drive it away*. Though people should take the *ague's* part, do not pay any heed, laugh at the babbling. *Whate'er be said, drive it away, whate'er be said, whate'er be said*. This *whate'er be said* has more in it than it seems to have. As for me, I do not know, if everyone resembles me; but I perceive a million words beneath it.

BEL. It is true, it says more things than it appears to do.

PHIL. (*To Trissotin*). But when you wrote this charming *whate'er be said*, did you yourself comprehend all its energy? Did you yourself reflect upon all which it conveys to us? And did you at that time think of putting so much wit in it?

TRIS. Eh! Eh!

AR. I have also my head full of *the ungrateful wretch*, that ungrateful *ague*, unjust, unmannerly, which treats people ill who give it a lodging.

PHIL. In short, the quatrains are both admirable. Let us come quickly to the triplets, pray.

AR. Ah! if you please, once more *whate'er be said*.

TRIS. *Whate'er be said, drive it away*.

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. *Whate'er be said!*

TRIS. *From 'neath your roof's splendid array . . .*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. *Your roof's splendid array! . . .*

TRIS. *To expel the ungrateful wretch that could . . .*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. *This ungrateful fever!*

TRIS. *Attack a life so fair, so good.*

PHIL. *A life so fair, so good.*

AR. AND BEL. Ah!

TRIS. *What ! not respecting your high rank,  
Your noble blood it basely drank.*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. Ah !

TRIS. *And day and night insults you so !  
If with it to the baths you go  
Without your making more ado,  
With your own hands then drown it too.*

PHIL. We are exhausted.

BEL. We swoon.

AR. We die with pleasure.

PHIL. It gives one a thousand gentle shiverings.

AR. *If with it to the baths you go.*

BEL. *Without your making more ado.*

PHIL. *With your own hands then drown it too. With  
your own hands, then, with your own hands, then drown  
it too.*

AR. At every step one encounters a charming trait in  
your verses.

BEL. Everywhere we wander there delighted

PHIL. One can light upon nothing but fine things in  
them.

AR. They are small paths all strewn with roses.

TRIS. The sonnet then seems to you . . .

PHIL. Admirable, new ; and no one has ever made any-  
thing so fine.

BEL. (*To Henriette*). What ! were you not touched on  
hearing this ? You made but a sorry figure, niece.

HEN. Each one makes here below the figure that one  
can make, aunt ; and it is not sufficient to wish to become  
a wit, in order to be one.

TRIS. Perhaps my verses are troublesome to this lady.

HEN. Not at all. I do not listen to them.

PHIL. Ah ! let us have the epigram.

TRIS. *On a coach of an amarant colour given to a lady  
of his acquaintance.*<sup>22</sup>

PHIL. The very names of his pieces have always some-  
thing peculiar.

AR. Their novelty prepares one for a hundred fine  
strokes of wit.

<sup>22</sup> This epigram is in the same volume as the sonnet mentioned before,  
and bears nearly the same title as the sonnet of Trissotin.



TRIS. *Love has so dearly sold me to his chains.*

PHIL., AR., AND BEL. Ah!

TRIS. *That half of my estate only remains;  
And when this beauteous couch you shall behold,  
On which there are embossed such heaps of gold,  
That all the country wonders at the ride,  
And makes my Lais triumph in her pride.*

PHIL. Ah! my Lais! There is erudition!

BEL. The disguise is pretty, and worth a million.

TRIS. *And when this beauteous couch you shall behold,  
On which there are embossed such heaps of gold,  
That all the country wonders at the ride,  
And makes my Lais triumph in her pride,  
No longer say 'tis amarant,  
Say rather that it is my land.*

AR. Oh! oh! oh! that was not at all expected.

PHIL. Only he could write in such taste.

BEL. *No longer say 'tis amarant,  
Say rather that it is my land,  
This may be declined, my land, of my land, to my  
land.<sup>24</sup>*

PHIL. I know not whether my mind was prepossessed in your favour, from the moment I knew you; but I admire everywhere your verse and your prose.

TRIS. (*To Philaminte*). If you would show us something of your own, we in our turn might also admire.

PHIL. I have written nothing in verse; but I have reason to hope that I shall soon be able to show you, as among friends, eight chapters of the plan of our academy. Plato foolishly stopped at this project, when he wrote the treatise upon his Republic; but I shall carry out the idea which I have arranged in prose upon paper. For, in short, I feel strangely annoyed at the wrong which they do us with regard to wit; and I wish to vindicate ourselves, that is my whole sex, from the unworthy class in which men place us, by confining our talents to trifling things, and by closing against us the entrance to sublime lights.

<sup>24</sup> The original has *Ne dis plus qu'il est amarante, dis plutôt qu'il est de ma rente*, on which Bélise justly remarks, "this may be declined *ma rente, de ma rente, à ma rente*."

AR. It is giving too great an offence to our sex to extend the effort of our intelligence no farther than to judge about a skirt, or the shape of a mantle, or the beauties of a piece of lace, or of a new brocade.

BEL. We must rise from this shameful condition, and openly set our genius at liberty.

TRIS. My respect for the ladies at all times is well known ; and, if I render homage to the brilliancy of their eyes, I also honour the light of their intelligence.

PHIL. The sex likewise does you justice on this point ; but we wish to show to certain wits, whose proud knowledge treats us with disdain, that women are also endowed with learning ; that, like them, they can hold learned assemblies, conducted by better rules ; inasmuch as they wish to unite what they separate elsewhere,<sup>25</sup> join fine language to the higher sciences, explore nature by a thousand experiments, and upon any question that may be proposed, bring in each sect, and espouse the opinions of none.

TRIS. For order, I hold by peripateticism.<sup>26</sup>

PHIL. For abstractions, I love platonism.

AR. Epicurus pleases me, and his dogmas are strong.

BEL. I accommodate myself sufficiently well to the atomic system ; but I think a vacuum is difficult to be endured, and I relish the subtle matter much better.

TRIS. As for the properties of the magnet, Descartes agrees with my opinion.

AR. I am fond of his vortices.

PHIL. I, of his falling worlds.

AR. I am anxious to see our assembly opened, and that we should signalize ourselves by some discovery.

TRIS. We expect much from your enlightened opinions ; for nature has few things that are dark to you.

PHIL. As for me, without flattering myself, I have already made one, and I have clearly seen men in the moon.

BEL. I have not seen men as yet, as I think ; but I have seen steeples as clearly as I see you.

AR. We shall probe grammar, history, poetry, moral philosophy, and politics, as well as physics.

<sup>25</sup> An allusion to the French Academy, founded in 1633, and the Academy of Sciences, founded in 1666.

<sup>26</sup> That is the doctrine of Aristotle.

PHIL. Moral philosophy has charms by which my heart is smitten; and it was formerly the passion of great minds; but I yield the palm to the Stoics, and I find nothing so beautiful as their wise men.

AR. As for the language, they shall see our regulations in a little time, and we pretend to make some revolutions.<sup>27</sup> Through antipathy, either just or natural, we have each of us conceived a mortal hatred for a number of words, whether verbs, or nouns which we mutually abandon. Against them we are preparing deadly sentences, and we design to open our learned conferences by the proscription of all those divers words of which we wish to purge both prose and poetry.<sup>28</sup>

PHIL. But the most beautiful project of our academy, a noble enterprise, with which I am delighted, a design full of glory, and which shall be lauded among all the great minds of posterity, is the retrenching of these filthy syllables which cause a scandal in the finest words, these eternal playthings of the fools of all times, these nauseous commonplaces of our sorry jokers, these sources of a mass of infamous equivocations with which they insult the modesty of women.

TRIS. These are certainly admirable projects.

BEL. You shall see our statutes when they shall be made.

TRIS. All are certain to be beautiful and wise.

AR. We shall be, by our laws, the judges of works; by our laws, prose and verse, everything shall be submitted to us. No one shall have any wit beyond ourselves and friends.<sup>29</sup> We shall seek everywhere to find something to cavil at, and shall see none but ourselves able to write well.

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<sup>27</sup> The *précieuses* really held dissertations about the language, and first brought into use many energetic phrases, and the present orthography.

<sup>28</sup> Several members of the Academy intended to banish from the French language such words as *car*, *encore*, *néanmoins*, *pourquoi*, and several others.

<sup>29</sup> This saying, *Nul n'aura de l'esprit, hors nous et nos amis*, has become proverbial, and seems to be aimed at Ménage and his *clique*.

SCENE III.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE,  
TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

LEP. (*To Trissotin*). A man is there, Sir, who wishes to speak to you; he is dressed in black, and speaks in a soft tone. (*They rise.*)

TRIS. It is that learned friend who has pressed me so much to procure him the honour of your acquaintance.

PHIL. You have our full consent to introduce him.

(*Trissotin goes to meet Vadius.*)

SCENE IV.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

Phil. (*To Armande and to Bélise*). Let us do well the honours at least of our wit. (*To Henriette, who wishes to go*). Hullo! I have told you very distinctly that I want you.

HEN. But for what?

PHIL. Come hither; we shall let you know shortly.

SCENE V.—TRISSOTIN, VADIUS, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE,  
ARMANDE, HENRIETTE.

TRIS. (*Presenting Vadius*). Behold the man who is dying to see you. In introducing him here I do not fear being blamed for having admitted a profane among you, Madam. He can hold his own amongst the wits.

PHIL. The hand that presents him is sufficient guarantee.

TRIS. He has a perfect knowledge of the old authors, and he knows Greek, Madam, as well as any man in France.

PHIL. (*To Bélise*). Greek, O Heavens! Greek! He knows Greek, sister!

BEL. (*To Armande*). Ah! niece, Greek!

ARM. Greek! how charming!

PHIL. What! This gentleman knows Greek! Ah! permit me, pray, that, for the love of Greek, Sir, I embrace you. (*Vadius embraces Bélise and Armande also.*)

HEN. (*To Vadius, who wishes to embrace her also*). Excuse me, Sir, I do not understand Greek.

(*They sit down.*)

PHIL. I have a marvellous respect for Greek books.

VAD. I fear that, through the anxiety which prompts





He is not a

Character is

## THE LEARNED LADIES.

ACT III.









me to pay you my respects to-day, Madam, I am intruding; and that I shall be disturbing some learned conversation.

PHIL. With Greek, Sir, nothing can be spoilt.

TRIS. Besides, he does wonders in verse as well as prose, and could, if he would, show you something.

VAD. The fault of authors is to tyrannize in conversation with their productions; in being at the *Palais*<sup>30</sup> in public<sup>31</sup>, walks, at the *ruelles*, at table the indefatigable reciters of their own tiresome verses. As for me, I see nothing more absurd, according to my opinion, than an author who goes begging everywhere for incense, who, catching the ears of the first comers, often makes them the martyrs of his vigils. I have never had this foolish hobby; and I am, on this subject, of the opinion of a Greek who, by an express dogma, forbids all his followers the undignified eagerness of reading their own works. Here are some small verses for young lovers, upon which I should like to have your opinions.

TRIS. Your verses have charms which no others have.

VAD. The Graces and Venus reign in all yours.

TRIS. Your turn is unconstrained, and you choose your words well.

VAD. Throughout all your works the *ithos* and *pathos*<sup>32</sup> are seen.

TRIS. We have had some eclogues from you, which surpass in sweet charms Theocritus and Virgil.<sup>33</sup>

VAD. Your odes have a noble ring, gallant and sweet, which leave Horace very far behind.<sup>34</sup>

TRIS. Is there aught more amorous than your little songs?

VAD. Is there anything to equal your sonnets?

TRIS. There is nothing so charming as your little *rondeaux*.

VAD. Nothing so full of wit as your madrigals.

<sup>30</sup> See page 433, note 8.

<sup>31</sup> The original has *Cours*.

<sup>32</sup> These are terms of rhetoric borrowed from the Greek; the first means *morals*, the second *feeling*.

<sup>33</sup> Ménage wrote some eclogues which had a certain reputation.

<sup>34</sup> This mutual flattery of Trissotin and Vadius has been suggested by a passage from Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*.

TRIS. In the ballads, above all, you are admirable.

VAD. And in *bouts-rimés* I think you adorable.<sup>25</sup>

TRIS. If France could but know your worth.

VAD. If the age did but render justice to men of wit.

TRIS. In a gilded coach you would pass through the streets.

VAD. We should see the public erect statues to you (*to Trissotin*). Hm! it is a ballad, and I should like you to tell me plainly. . . .

TRIS. (*To Vadius*). Have you seen a little sonnet on the *ague* which has attacked the princess Uranie.<sup>26</sup>

VAD. Yes; it was read to me yesterday in a certain company.

TRIS. Do you know the author of it?

VAD. No; but I know well enough that, not to flatter him, his sonnet is worth nothing.

TRIS. Many people think it admirable, however.

VAD. That does not prevent it from being very wretched; and if you had read it, you would be of my way of thinking.

TRIS. I know that I should differ with you on this subject, and that few people are capable of such a sonnet.

VAD. Heaven preserve me from writing such!

TRIS. I maintain that nothing better could be written; and my great reason is, that I am the author of it.

VAD. You?

TRIS. I.

VAD. I do not know then how the affair happened.

TRIS. It is that I was not fortunate enough to be able to please you.

VAD. I must have been absent-minded in listening to it, or the reader must have spoilt me the sonnet.<sup>27</sup> But let us drop the subject and look to my ballad.

<sup>25</sup> *Bouts-rimés* are verses in which the final words were given first, and which had then to be filled up.

<sup>26</sup> Trissotin and Vadius are both anxious to shine before the ladies, and as soon as the latter wishes to read his ballad, the former begins to speak of his sonnet.

<sup>27</sup> Madame de Sévigné mentions in one of her letters a similar fact, how Louis XIV. deceived an old courtier, the Marshal de Grammont, by asking his opinion about a madrigal, which the king pretended to think rather feeble. De Grammont thought it wretched, and was quite dumbfounded when Louis told him that he was himself the author of it.

TRIS. A ballad, to my taste, is an insipid thing; it is no longer the fashion; it smacks of ancient times.

VAD. The ballad, however, charms many people.

TRIS. That does not prevent it from displeasing me.

VAD. It remains none the worse for that.

TRIS. It has wondrous charms for certain pedants.

VAD. And yet we see that it does not please you.

TRIS. You foolishly attribute your own qualities to others. *(They all rise.)*

VAD. You throw yours at me very impertinently.

TRIS. Go along, you little dunce, you pitiful scribbler.

VAD. Go along, you doggerel rhymester,<sup>39</sup> you disgrace of the profession.

TRIS. Go along, you second-hand verse-dealer, you impudent plagiarist.

VAD. Go along, you numbskull . . .

PHIL. He! gentlemen, what are you about?

TRIS. *(To Vadius)*. Go, go, and make restitution of your shameful larcenies which the Greeks and Latins claim from you.<sup>40</sup>

VAD. Go, go, and do penance to Parnassus, for having maimed Horace with your verses.

TRIS. Remember your book, and the little stir it caused.

VAD. And you, your publisher reduced to the hospital.

TRIS. My fame is established; you attack it in vain.

VAD. Yes, yes; I refer you to the author of the Satires.

TRIS. I refer you also to him.

VAD. I have the satisfaction of people seeing that he has treated me more honourably. He gives me a slight dig,<sup>41</sup> by the way, among many authors who are esteemed at the *Palais*; but he never leaves you in peace in his verses, and we find you a butt for his arrows throughout.

TRIS. It is by this that I hold the more honourable rank. He places you among the crowd like a miserable being; he thinks one blow enough to knock you down, and

<sup>39</sup> The original has *rimeur de balle*, because things of inferior quality were called *marchandises de balle*, from *balle*, a hawker's bale.

<sup>40</sup> Ménage is said to have pilfered a great deal from the ancients.

<sup>41</sup> Boileau has attacked Ménage only once, and that slightly, in his fourth satire.

has never done you the honour to repeat it. But he attacks me apart as a noble adversary, against whom all his efforts seem necessary; and his blows, repeated against me everywhere, show that he never believes himself certain of the victory.

VAD. My pen shall teach you what sort of a man I can be.

TRIS. And mine will make you see your master.

VAD. I defy you in verse, prose, Greek, and Latin.

TRIS. Well! we shall see each other alone at Barbin.<sup>41</sup>

SCENE VI.—TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, HENRIETTE.

TRIS. Do not blame me for giving way to my temper; it is your judgment which I defend, Madam, in the sonnet which he has had the audacity to attack.

PHIL. It shall be my care to reconcile you. But let us speak of something else. Draw near, Henriette. For a long time my heart has been uneasy, because I could never perceive any trace of wit in you; but I have found the means of making you have some.

HEN. You take pains for me which are unnecessary; learned conversations are not at all in my way: I love to live at ease; and, in whatever is said, one must take too much trouble to become clever; it is an ambition which does not at all enter my mind. I find myself very well, mother, in being stupid; and I prefer having nothing but common-place talk to tormenting myself to say fine words.

PHIL. Yes; but I am hurt at it, and it does not suit me to bear, in my own family, such a disgrace. Beauty of countenance is but a frail ornament, a transitory flower, the dazzle of a moment, which exists but in the epidermis; but that of the mind is inherent and firm. I have, therefore, long looked for some way to give you that beauty which years cannot reap, to inspire you with a love for learning, and to instil into you a desire for fine knowledge; and, in short, the thought to which my wishes

<sup>41</sup> Barbin was one of the chief booksellers of the time, and his shop was at the *Palais*.

tended, is to attach to you a man replete with Intelligence. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). And that man is this gentleman, whom I command you to look upon as the husband whom my choice intends for you.

HEN. I! mother?

PHL. Yes, you. Play the fool a little.

BEL. (*To Trissotin*). I understand you: your eyes demand my consent to pledge elsewhere a heart which I possess. Go, I am willing. To this bond I surrender you; it is a union that will be the making of you.

TRIS. (*To Henriette*). I do not know what to say to you in my delight, Madam; and this union, with which I see myself honoured, puts me . . .

HEN. Gently, Sir; it is not yet concluded: do not hurry yourself so much.

PHIL. How you answer! Do you know that . . . ? Enough. You understand me. (*To Trissotin*). She will be sensible. Come, let us leave her.

SCENE VII.—HENRIETTE, ARMANDE

AR. We see shining forth our mother's care for you; and she could not have chosen a more illustrious husband . . .

HEN. If the choice be so fine, why do not you take it?

AR. It is to you, not to me, that his hand is given.

HEN. I surrender it all, as to my elder sister.

AR. If wedlock were invested with any charm for me, as it is for you, I should accept your offer with delight.

HEN. If I had, like you, my head full of pedants, I should think him a very decent match.

AR. Though our tastes in this may be different, we ought, however, to obey our parents, sister. A mother has an absolute power over us; and you believe in vain, by your resistance . . .

SCENE VIII.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE, ARMANDE.

CH. (*To Henriette, presenting Clitandre to her*). Come, daughter, you must approve my design. Take off your glove. Take this gentleman's hand, and henceforth consider him in your heart, as a man whose wife I wish you to be.

AR. On this side your likings are very strong, sister.

HEN. We must obey our parents, sister. A father has absolute power over our wishes.

AR. A mother has her claim to our obedience.

CH. What does it mean?

AR. I say that I apprehend much that on this my mother and you will not agree; and that it is another husband . . .

CH. Hold your tongue, you saucy jade; go and have your fill at philosophizing with her; and do not concern yourself with my actions. Tell her my mind, and take care to warn her not to come and pester my ears. Go quickly.

SCENE IX.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE, HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE.

ARI. Very good. You have done wonders.

CLI. What transport! what joy! Ah, how sweet is my lot!

CH. (*To Clitandre*). Come, take her hand, and go before us; conduct her to her room. Ah! the sweet caresses! (*To Ariste*). There, my heart leaps at all these tender signs; it makes my old days feel young again, and I look back upon my youthful love affairs.

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.—PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE.

[ AR. Yes, nothing has kept her mind in check; she is proud of her obedience. Scarcely has her heart given itself time to receive the order in my presence before it surrendered, and seemed less to follow the wishes of a father than affect to defy the orders of a mother.

PHIL. I shall soon show her to whose orders the laws of reason subject her wishes, and who is to control, her mother or her father, the mind or the body, the form or the matter.

AR. The compliment of it was, at least, due to you: and this little gentleman behaves strangely in wishing to become your son-in-law, in spite of you.

PHIL. He is not there yet where his heart aspires to be. I thought him well enough, and I looked with pleasure on your love-affairs; but he has always displeased me in his way of acting. He knew, Heaven be thanked, that I was an author; and yet he never asked me to read anything to him.

SCENE II.—CLITANDRE, *entering softly, and listening without being seen*, ARMANDE, PHILAMINTE.

AR. I should not allow, if I were you, that he should ever become the husband of Henriette. It would be doing me a great wrong to imagine that I speak about this as an interested girl, and that the scurvy trick which he plays me produces some secret spite at the bottom of my heart. Against such blows the soul is strengthened by the solid assistance of philosophy, and through her we may place ourselves above everything; but to treat you thus is to drive you to extremes. It becomes your honour to oppose his wishes; and he is a man, in short, who ought not to please you. Between ourselves, I never knew that in his inmost heart he had any esteem for you.

PHIL. The little fool!

AR. Whatever praises were uttered about you, he always seemed like ice when it came to lauding you.

PHIL. The coarse man!

AR. And twenty times I have read him, as a novelty, some of your verses which he did not like.

PHIL. The impertinent fellow!

AR. We often quarrelled about it; and you would not believe how much nonsense . . .

CLI. (*To Armande*). Eh! gently, pray. A little charity, Madam, or, at least, a little honesty. What harm have I done to you? and what is my offence, to have all your eloquence up in arms against me? to wish to destroy me, and to take so much trouble in making me odious with people of whom I stand in need? Speak, say, whence comes this terrible anger? I have no objection that this lady should honestly judge between us.

AR. If I harboured this anger of which you wish to accuse me, I should find sufficient to justify it. You but too well deserve it; and a first love establishes such sacred

rights upon the heart, that sooner than burn with the flame of another passion, one should lose one's fortune, and renounce life. Nothing equals the horror of a change in love; and every faithless heart is a monster in morality.

CL. Do you account it an infidelity, Madam, to do what the pride of your heart has commanded me? I only obey its commands; and, if I offend you, that alone is the cause of it. Your charms at first possessed my whole heart; it burned constantly for two years; no assiduous attentions, duties, respects, services, but what it sacrificed lovingly to you. All my affection, all my attentions, avail nothing with you; I find you opposed to my sweetest aspirations. What you refuse, I offer to another. Now judge. Is it, Madam, my fault or yours? Does my heart run after change, or does yours goad me to it? Is it I who leaves you, or you who drives me away?

AR. Do you call it being opposed to your desires, Sir, to deprive them of what was vulgar in them, and to wish to reduce them to that purity wherein consists the beauty of perfect love? You cannot for me keep your thoughts clear and disentangled from the commerce of the senses; and do you not taste, as its sweetest charms, this union of hearts, in which the bodies are not concerned. You cannot love except with a gross love, and with all its train of material bonds: and, to feed the flames produced in your heart, a marriage and all its sequel is necessary. Ah! what strange love, and how far removed are noble souls from burning with such terrestrial flames! The senses have no share in all their ardours; and this lovely fire unites nought but hearts. It leaves the rest as an unworthy matter; it is a fire, pure and clear as the heavenly fire; one utters nought but virtuous sighs, and does not tend towards filthy desires. Nothing impure is mixed with the proposed aim; one loves for the sake of love, and for nothing else; it is to the mind only that all transports are directed, and one never perceives that one has a body.

CL. As for me, to my misfortune, Madam, I perceive but too plainly that I have a body as well as a soul; I feel that it sticks too closely to it to leave it aside. I do not



know the art of these separations ; Heaven has denied me this philosophy, and my body and soul go together. There is nothing more beautiful, as you have observed, than these purified desires, which regard the mind only, this union of hearts, and these tender thoughts so disentangled from the commerce of the senses. But for me such affections are too subtle ; I am somewhat gross, as you accuse me ; I love with my whole self, and the love with which I am inspired, is meant, I confess, for the whole person. This is not a matter for very great punishments ; and, without wronging your fine sentiments, I perceive that in the world my method is greatly followed, and that marriage is much the fashion, and that it passes for a sufficiently sweet and honourable tie, for me to have desired to become your husband, without the liberty of such a thought giving you the least reason for being offended.

AR. Well ! Sir, well ! since your coarse sentiments wish to gratify themselves, without listening to me ; since, to induce you to remain faithful, there must be carnal bonds, corporeal chains, if my mother wishes it, I shall make up my mind to consent for your sake to what we were speaking of.

CLÉ. It is too late, Madam, another has taken your place ; and it would ill become me to repay in such a manner the protection, and wound the kindness that sheltered me against your pride.

PHIL. But in short, Sir, do you count upon my consent when you contemplate this other marriage ? and, if you please, do you imagine, that I have another husband quite ready for Henriette ?

CLÉ. Eh ! Madam, consider your choice, I pray ; expose me, I beseech you, to less ignominy, and do not consign me to the humbling lot of seeing myself the rival of Mr. Trissotin. The love of wits, which makes you thwart me, cannot oppose me a less noble adversary. There are many men, whom the bad taste of the age has given credit for being wits ; but Mr. Trissotin has not been able to dupe any one, and all do justice to the writings which he gives us. Except here, he is valued everywhere at his real worth ; and what has a score of times astonished me, is to find you exalt to the skies silly verses which you

would have disavowed, if you had made them yourself.

PHIL. If you judge him altogether otherwise than we, it is because we see him with other eyes than yours.

SCENE III.—TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, CLITANDRE.

TRIS. (*To Philaminte*). I have come to tell you a great piece of news. We have, Madam, while sleeping, had a narrow escape. A world has passed along by us, has fallen across our vortex, and, if it had on its way met with our earth, it would have been broken into pieces, like glass.<sup>42</sup>

PHIL. Let us remit this conversation to another opportunity. This gentleman would find neither rhyme nor reason in it; he professes to love ignorance, and above all to hate wit and learning.

CLI. This truth requires some qualification. I shall explain myself, Madam; and I hate only the wit and learning that spoil people. They are things which, in themselves, are good and great; but I should prefer being in the rank of those who are ignorant to being learned like certain persons.

TRIS. For my part, I do not think that learning can spoil anything, whatever may be supposed.

CLI. And it is my opinion, that in facts as well as in conversations, science often makes great fools.

TRIS. That is a great paradox.

CLI. Without being very clever, the proof of it would, I think, be very easy to me. If reasons failed, I am sure that in any case famous examples would not fail me.

TRIS. You might quote some which would prove hardly anything.

CLI. I should not have far to go to find what I want.

TRIS. For my part, I do not see those famous examples.

CLI. As for me, I see them so plainly, that they stare me in the face.

TRIS. I have hitherto believed that it was ignorance which made great fools, and not learning.

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<sup>42</sup> Cotin had published a very long dissertation, called *A Gallantry about the Comet which appeared in December 1664, and January 1665*.

CLI. You have believed very wrongly, and I will be bound that a learned fool is more foolish than an ignorant fool.

TRIS. Common opinion is against your maxims, since ignorant and fool are synonymous terms.

CLI. If you will take it according to the use of the word, the affinity is greater between pedant and fool.

TRIS. Folly, in the one, appears perfectly pure.

CLI. And study, in the other, adds to nature.

TRIS. Learning in itself has eminent merit.

CLI. Learning in a fop becomes impertinent.

TRIS. Ignorance must have great charms for you, since you take up arms so eagerly in its defence.

CLI. If ignorance has such great charms for me, it is since I have seen certain learned men.

TRIS. Those certain learned men may, when they are known, be worth certain other people who are not far off.

CLI. Yes, if certain learned people were to be judges; but would people agree to it?

PHIL. (*To Clitandre*). It seems to me, sir . . .

CLI. Eh! Madam, pray; this gentleman is strong enough without you coming to his aid. I have already too formidable an assailant, and if I defend myself, I only do so by retreating.

AR. But the offensive sharpness of each repartee of which you. . .

CLI. Another second! I give up the game. v

PHIL. We allow these kinds of combats in conversation, provided the person be not attacked.

CLI. Eh, good Heavens! all this has nothing in it to offend him; he understands raillery as well as any man in France; and he has felt himself goaded with many other points, without his glory ever doing aught but smiling at it.<sup>43</sup>

TRIS. I am not astonished to see this gentleman set forth the thesis in the combat which I maintain; he is much at court, that is saying everything. The court, it is well known, does not stand up for wit. It has some in-

<sup>43</sup> The Abbé Cotin was pretty quarrelsome, and had had many literary disputes.

terest in supporting ignorance, Madam; and it is as a courtier that he takes up its defence.

CLI. You are very hard upon this poor court; and its misfortune is great to find you gentlemen of wit every day declaiming against it; laying all your annoyances at its door, and quarrelling with it upon its bad taste, accusing no one but it upon your ill success. Permit me to tell you, Mr. Trissotin, with all the respect with which your name inspires me, that you and your brethren would do very well to speak of the court in somewhat gentler tones; and that, after all, it is not so silly as you and these other gentlemen imagine; that it has common sense to judge of everything; that some good taste may be formed there, and that the knowledge of the world which is there displayed is, without flattery, worth all the obscure learning of pedantry.

TRIS. Of its good taste, Sir, we behold the effects.

CLI. Where, Sir, do you see that it is so bad?

TRIS. What do I see, Sir? Is it that as regards learning Rasius and Baldus are an honour to France; and that all their merit, clear as day, attracts neither the eyes nor the gifts of the court.

CLI. I perceive your annoyance, Sir, and that, from modesty, you do not place yourself among them; and, not to bring you therefore into the question, what do these able heroes do for the state? in what way are their writings of any service to it to accuse the court of a horrible injustice, and complain everywhere that it fails to bestow the favour of its gifts on their learned names? Their learning is very necessary to France! and the court cares much about the books which they write! Three beggarly fellows take it into their narrow heads, that if they are only printed and bound in calf they are important persons in the state; that with their pens they shape the destiny of crowns, that at the slightest rumour of their productions, pensions ought to come flying to them; that the universe has its eyes on them; that the glory of their name is bruited about everywhere; and that they are famous prodigies in learning, because they know what others have said before them, because they have had eyes and ears for the last thirty years, and because they have spent nine

or ten thousand nights in confusing themselves with Greek and Latin, and loading their minds with the unintelligible booty of all the old trash that lies scattered about in books. People who always seem drunk with their learning; have no other merit than an abundance of troublesome talk; good for nothing, void of common sense, and full of a ridicule and an impertinence to decry everywhere wit and learning.

PHIL. Your warmth is great; and this violence marks the movement of nature in you. It is the name of rival which excites in your heart . . .

✓ SCENE IV.—TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, CLITANDRE,  
ARMANDE, JULIEN.

JUL. The learned gentleman who just now paid you a visit, and whose humble servant I have the honour to be, requests you to read this note.

PHIL. However important the letter may be which I am desired to read, know, friend, that it is a piece of rudeness to come to interrupt people in the midst of a conversation; and that as a servant who knows how to behave, you should have recourse to the people of the house to be introduced.

JUL. I shall note that down in my book, Madam.

PHIL. (Reads). "*Trissotin has boasted, Madam, that he is to marry your daughter. Let me inform you that his philosophy aims only at your wealth, and that you would do well not to conclude this marriage until you have read the poem which I am composing against him. Whilst this sketch is preparing, in which I mean to depict him in all his colours, I send you Horace, Virgil, Terence and Catullus, where you will see noted down on the margin all the passages which he has pillaged.*"

On account of this intended marriage, a man of merit is attacked by many enemies; and this very villifying induces me to-day to do an action which shall confound envy, and make it feel that its efforts accelerate the execution of that which it wishes to undo. (To Julien). Let your master immediately know this; and tell him that to show what great store I set on his noble counsels, and how worthy I think them of being acted upon, this very evening I marry him (Pointing to Trissotin), to my daughter.

## SCENE V.—PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, CLITANDRE.

PHIL. (*To Clitandre*). You, Sir, as a friend of the whole family, may assist at the signing of the contract; and I wish to invite you to it. Armande, take care to send for the notary, and to inform your sister of the business.

AR. There is no need to inform my sister; this gentleman here will charge himself with the trouble of running and carrying her the news very soon, and of disposing her heart to be rebellious against you.

PHIL. We shall see who will have the greatest power over her, and if I shall be able to bring her to her duty.

## SCENE VI.—ARMANDE, CLITANDRE.

AR. I regret much to see, Sir, that matters do not altogether turn out as you wished.

CLI. I am going to set about it zealously, Madam, so as not to leave you so much regret in your heart.

AR. I am afraid that your efforts will not have too good a result.

CLI. Perhaps you will not see your fear realized.

AR. I hope so.

CLI. I am convinced of it, and that I shall be assisted by your support.

AR. Yes, I am going to serve you with all my might.

CLI. And this service is sure of my gratitude.

SCENE VII.—CHRYSALE, ARISTE, HENRIETTE,  
CLITANDRE.

CLI. Without your support, I should be unhappy; your wife has rejected my addresses, and in her prejudiced heart wishes Trissotin for her son-in-law.

CH. But what fancy has she got hold of? Why the deuce does she wish for this Mr. Trissotin?

AR. It is because his name has the honour of rhyming with Latin, that he gains an advantage over his rival.

CLI. She wishes to conclude this marriage this very evening.

CH. This evening?

CLI. This evening.

CH. And this evening, I have made up my mind to marry you two, to thwart her.

CLI. She has sent for the notary to draw up the contract.

CH. And I am going to fetch him for the one he is to draw up.

CLI. (*Pointing to Henriette*). And this lady ought to be informed by her sister of the marriage to which they wish her to consent.

CH. And I command her, with plenary power, to prepare her hand for this other union. Ah! I will show if there be another master than myself in my house, to lay down the law. (*To Henriette*). We are coming back, take care to wait for us. Come, follow me, brother, and you also, son-in-law.

HEN. (*To Ariste*). Alas! try to keep him always in this humour.

ARI. I shall do everything to serve your love.

SCENE VIII.—HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE.

CLI. Whatever powerful aid he promises to my flame, my greatest hope is in your heart, Madam.

HEN. As for my heart, you may be assured of that.

CLI. I cannot but be happy, when I have its support.

HEN. You see to what marriage they attempt to compel it.

CLI. As long as it shall be mine, I see nothing to fear.

HEN. I am going to try everything to see our sweetest wishes fulfilled; and if all my efforts do not make me yours, there exists a retreat where the soul can fly to, and which shall prevent me from belonging to any other person.

CLI. May a just Heaven forbid that I should ever receive such a proof of your affection!

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## ACT V.

SCENE I.—HENRIETTE, TRISSOTIN.

HEN. It is about the marriage for which my mother is preparing that I wished, Sir, to talk to you face-to-face;

and I thought that in the trouble in which I see the whole household plunged, I might make you listen to reason. I know that you expect me to bring you a considerable marriage portion ; but money, of which so many people are fond, has only charms unworthy of a real philosopher ; and the contempt for wealth and frivolous grandeur ought not to shine in your words alone.

TRIS. Nor is it that which charms me in you ; and your brilliant attractions, your piercing and soft eyes, your gracefulness and your air, are the wealth, the riches which draw my affection and my tenderness towards you: these are the only treasures of which I am enamoured.

HEN. I am much beholden to your generous flame. Such obliging love confounds me, and I regret, Sir, not to be able to respond to it. I esteem you as much as one can esteem ; but I find an obstacle to loving you. A heart, you know, cannot belong to two people ; and I feel that Clitandre has made himself master of mine. I know that he has much less merit than you, that I am no good observer when I choose him for a husband ; that by a hundred fine accomplishments, you ought to please me ; I see well enough that I am wrong, but I cannot help it ; and the only effect which reason has upon me is to make me angry with myself for being so blind.

TRIS. The gift of your hand, to which I am encouraged to pretend, shall also give me that heart which Clitandre possesses ; and I have reason to presume that by a thousand gentle cares I may find the secret of making myself beloved.

HEN. No ; my heart is attached to its first affections, and cannot be touched, Sir, by your attentions. I dare explain myself freely with you here, nor has my avowal anything to offend you. This affectionate ardour, which springs up in the heart, is not, as is well known, an effect of merit: fancy takes its share in it ; and, when some one pleases us, we often find a difficulty in saying why it is so. If we could love, Sir, by choice and prudence, you should have my whole heart, and my whole tenderness ; but we see that love is controlled otherwise. Leave me, I pray, to my blindness, and do not take advantage of this violence, which, for your sake, they wish to do to my obe-



dience. A gallant man wishes to owe nothing to the power which parents have over us. He has a repugnance to see the object of his love sacrificed, and does not wish to obtain a heart except from that heart itself. Do not drive my mother to wish, by her choice, to exercise her utmost rights upon my inclinations. Take back your love from me, and bear to some other the homage of a heart so precious as yours.

TRIS. How can this heart obey you? Impose upon it any commands which it can execute. Can it be capable of not loving you, unless you cease, Madam, to be loveable, and to display to people's eyes heavenly charms . . .

HEN. Nay, Sir, a truce to this idle nonsense. You have so many Irises, Philises, Amarantes, which throughout your verses you paint as charming, and to whom you vow so much amorous ardour. . . .

TRIS. It is my mind that speaks, and not my heart. I am enamoured of them only as a poet; but I love in all earnest the adorable Henriette.

HEN. Eh! pray, Sir. . . .

TRIS. If it offend you, my offence towards you is not likely to cease. This ardour, hitherto ignored by you, swears to be devoted to you for ever. Nothing can stay its loving transports; and, although your charms condemn my efforts, I cannot refuse the aid of a mother, who proposes to crown so dear a flame; and, provided I obtain so sweet a happiness, provided you become mine, the rest does not matter.

HEN. But do you know that you risk a little more than you imagine by using violence with a heart; that it is not very safe, to speak frankly to you, to marry a girl in spite of herself; and that she may have recourse, by seeing herself forced, to resentments which a husband ought to fear?

TRIS. Such a discourse has nothing in it to make me uneasy; a wise man is prepared for all emergencies. Cured by reason, of all vulgar weaknesses, he places himself above such things, and takes care not to feel the least annoyance at anything which does not depend upon himself.

HEN. In truth, Sir, I am delighted with you; and I

did not imagine that philosophy was so beautiful as it is, thus to teach people to bear with equanimity such accidents. This firmness of soul, so singular in you, deserves to have an illustrious subject to work upon, is worthy to find some one who lovingly takes continual pains to place it in its full light; and, as in truth, I dare not believe myself very fit to give it all the brilliancy of its glory, I leave it to some one else, and swear to you, between ourselves, that I renounce the happiness of seeing you my husband.

TRIS. (*Going*). We shall soon see how the affair will go on; for they have already got the notary within.

SCENE II.—CHRYSALE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE, MARTINE.

CH. Ah! daughter, I am glad to see you; come, come, and do your duty, and submit your wishes to the will of a father. I intend, I mean to teach your mother how to behave; and, the better to brave her, here is Martine whom, in spite of her, I bring back and re-instate in the house.

HEN. Your resolutions are worthy of praise. Take care not to change this disposition, father; be firm in having your wishes carried out; and do not allow them to induce you to abandon your good intentions. Do not unbend, and manage to prevent my mother from gaining a victory over you.

CH. How! Do you take me for a booby?

HEN. Heaven preserve me from it!

CH. Am I a simpleton, please?

HEN. I do not say so.

CH. Am I thought incapable of the steadfast sentiments of a reasonable man?

HEN. No, father.

CH. Should I not have the sense, at my age, to be master in my own house?

HEN. Yes, indeed.

CH. Should I be so weak in mind as to be led by the nose by my wife?

HEN. Eh! no, father.

CH. Lack-a-day! What, then, does all this mean? I think you very facetious to speak to me thus!

HEN. If I have offended you, it was not my intention.

CH. My will shall be carried out in everything in this house.

HEN. Very well, father.

CH. No one but myself, has a right to command in this house.

HEN. Yes; you are right.

CH. It is I who hold the place of head of the family.

HEN. Agreed.

CH. It is I who have to dispose of the hand of my daughter.

HEN. Eh! yes.

CH. Heaven gives me full authority over you.

HEN. Who says the contrary?

CH. And I shall soon show you that you have to obey your father, and not your mother, in taking a husband.

HEN. Alas! you flatter in this the sweetest of my inclinations; to obey you is all I wish.

CH. We shall see if my wife opposes my wishes . . .

CLIT. Here she comes bringing the notary with her.

CH. Second me well, all of you.

MAR. Leave it to me. I shall take care to encourage you if there be any need of it.

SCENE III.—PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, TRISSOTIN,  
A NOTARY, CHRYSALE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE,  
MARTINE.

PHIL. (*To the Notary*). Could you not change your barbarous style, and give us a contract in beautiful language.

NOT. Our style is very good, Madam, and I should be a fool to wish to change one word of it.

BEL. Ah! what barbarism in the very midst of France! But at least, out of regard for learning, Sir, be kind enough to enumerate the dowry in minæ and talents instead of in crowns, livres, and francs, and to date by the words of ides and calends.

NOT. I? If I were to grant your requests, Madam, I should find myself hooted by all my colleagues.

PHIL. We complain in vain against this barbarism. Come, Sir, sit down and write. (*Perceiving Martine*).

Ah! ah! this impudent girl dares to show her face here again! Why, pray, bring her back to my house?

CH. Bye-and-bye, at our leisure, we shall tell you. Now we have other matters to look after.

NOT. Let us proceed to the contract. Where is the intended bride?

PHIL. She whom I marry is the youngest daughter.

NOT. Very well.

CH. (*Pointing to Henriette*). Yes, here she is, Sir. Her name is Henriette.

NOT. Very good. And the intended bridegroom?

PHIL. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). The husband whom I give here is this gentleman.

CH. (*Pointing to Clitandre*). And the one whom I myself intend her to marry is this gentleman.

NOT. Two husbands! It is one too many, according to custom.

PHIL. (*To the Notary*). Why do you stop? Set down, set down Mr. Trissotin, for my son-in-law.

CH. For my son-in-law, set down, set down, Mr. Clitandre.

NOT. But first agree among yourselves, and after having well-weighed everything, decide between you who shall be the intended husband.

PHIL. Follow the choice, Sir, upon which I have resolved.

CH. Do things as I tell you, Sir.

NOT. Tell me which of the two I am to obey.

PHIL. (*To Chrysale*). What, you oppose my wish!

CH. I shall not allow my daughter to be courted only for the sake of my family's wealth.

PHIL. Indeed, your wealth is a great deal thought of! And a wise man takes much heed of that!

CH. In one word, I have made choice of Clitandre for her husband.

PHIL. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). And behold the one whom I design for her. My choice shall prevail; I have made up my mind to that!

CH. Upon my word! You carry things with a very high hand.

MAR. It is not for the wife to dictate, and I am for giving way in things to the men.

CH. That is well said.

MAR. Were I ever so certain of being turned out,<sup>44</sup> the hen ought not to crow before the cock.

CH. Undoubtedly.

MAR. And we see people jeer at a man when the wife at home wears the breeches.

CH. That is true.

MAR. I say that if I had a husband, I should like him to be master in his own house: I should not like him to play the nobody;<sup>45</sup> and, if I went against him through some whim or other, if I spoke too loud, I should think it very good that he lowered my tone by some slaps.

CH. That is sensibly spoken.

MAR. Master is reasonable to wish a proper husband for his daughter.

CH. Yes.

MAR. For what reason should Clitandre, young and handsome as he is, be refused to her? And why, if you please, give her a scholar, who is unceasingly making epilogues? She wants a husband, not a pedagogue; and having no wish to know either Greek or Latin, she has no need of Mr. Trissotin.

CH. Very good.

PHIL. We must allow her to chatter at her ease.

MAR. Scholars are good for nothing but to preach; and for my husband, yes, I have said it a thousand times, I would never take a man of wit. Wit is not at all wanted at the domestic hearth. Books go badly with wedlock; and I should wish, if ever my troth were plighted, a husband who had no other book but myself, who, without offence to Madam, knows not A from B, and who, in one word, should only be a doctor for his wife.

PHIL. (*To Chrysale*). Is it finished? And have I listened quietly enough to your worthy interpreter?

CH. She has spoken the truth.

<sup>44</sup> The original has *mon congé tant fois m'a fait-il hoc*. *Hoc* means "assured," but its etymology is uncertain. Some say it is derived from a game of cards called *hoc*; others from *hoc*, meaning "yes" in Provençal; others, again, from *hoc*, meaning *croc*, a hook; and finally, *hoc*, with the Latin meaning of "that."

<sup>45</sup> The original has *s'il faisait le Jocrisse*.

PHIL. And I, to cut short this dispute, require absolutely that my plan should be carried out. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). Henriette and this gentleman shall be joined on the spot. I have said it, I will have it so; do not answer me. And if your word has been pledged to Clitandre, offer him to marry the elder..

CH. Here is a way to settle this matter. (*To Henriette and Clitandre*). Well! do you give your consent to it?

HEN. Eh! father . . .

CLI. (*To Chrysale*). Eh! Sir . . .

BEL. We might make proposals to him that should please him better; but we are for establishing a kind of love that shall be pure as the morning star: the reflecting substance may be admitted into it; but we banish the extended substance from it.

SCENE IV.—ARISTE, CHRYSALE, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, HENRIETTE, ARMANDE, TRISSOTIN, NOTARY, CLITANDRÉ, MARTINE.

ARI. I regret to trouble a festive ceremony by the sorrow which I am obliged to cause here. These two letters make me the bearer of two tidings, of which I have felt great grief for your sakes. (*To Philaminte*). The one for you comes to me from your solicitor. (*To Chrysale*). The other for you comes to me from Lyons.

PHIL. Who can write us about a misfortune worthy of troubling us?

ARI. This letter will relate one to you.

PHIL. "*Madam, I have requested your brother to hand you this letter, which will inform you what I dared not come to tell you. The great neglect which you show for your affairs has caused the clerk of your judge not to give me notice, and you have irrevocably lost your lawsuit, which you ought to have won.*"

CH. (*To Philaminte*). Your lawsuit lost!

PHIL. You trouble yourself much! My heart is not at all upset by this blow. Show a less common soul, and brave, like me, the strokes of fortune. "*This want of care costs you forty thousand crowns; and you have been condemned to pay this sum with costs, by an order of the Court.*" Con-

demned? Ah! this word is offensive, and is made for criminals only!

ARIS. He is wrong, in fact; and you right in finding fault with him. He ought to have said that you are invited, by order of the Court, to pay as quickly as possible forty thousand crowns and the necessary expenses.

PHIL. Let us see the other.

CH. "*Sir, the friendship which binds me to your brother makes me take an interest in all that concerns you. I know that you have placed all your property in the hands of Argante and Damon, and I beg to give you notice that they have both become bankrupts on the same day. O Heavens! at once to lose all that I possess!*"

PHIL. (*To Chrysale*). Ah! What a shameful outbreak! Fie! all this is nothing. To the real philosopher there is no serious reverse, and, losing everything, he still remains all in all to himself. Let us terminate our affair, and have done with your grief. (*Pointing to Trissotin*). His wealth will suffice for us all.

TRIS. No, Madam: cease to press this matter. I see that every one is opposed to this marriage, and I have no desire to force people's inclinations.

PHIL. This consideration has come upon you very quickly; it follows very closely, Sir, upon our misfortune.

TRIS. I am weary at last of so much resistance. I prefer renouncing all this bickering, and do not wish for a heart which does not give itself freely.

PHIL. I see, I see now, and not at all to your credit, what hitherto I have refused to believe of you.

TRIS. You may believe of me what you please, and I care little how you take it: but I am not the man to suffer the shame of the offensive refusals which I have undergone here. I am well worth being made much more of and my service to those who will not have me.

SCENE V.—ARISTE, CHRYSALE, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE, NOTARY, MARTINE.

PHIL. How clearly he has shown his mercenary soul!

and how little there is of the philosopher in what he has just done!

CL. I do not boast of being such; but in one word, I do not separate my fate from yours, Madam; and I dare offer you with my person the little which fortune has bestowed upon me.

PHIL. You charm me, Sir, by this generous trait, and I will crown the desires of your affection. Yes; I grant Henriette to the eager ardour . . .

HEN. No, mother; I now change my mind. Permit me to resist your wishes.

CLIT. What! you oppose my happiness! and, when I see every one yield to my love . . .

HEN. I know the smallness of your fortune, Clitandre; and I have ever desired you for my husband, when by satisfying my sweetest inclinations I saw that my union improved your affairs. But when we have such contrary fates, I love you sufficiently in such extremity, not to burden you with our adversity.

CLIT. Every destiny shared with you would be pleasant; every destiny without you would be unbearable.

HEN. Love, in its transport, speaks always thus. Let us avoid painful and unpleasant reflections. Nothing wears so quickly the affections of the tie which binds us as the sad necessities of life's cares; and people often, upon such occasions, accuse each other mutually of all the dismal griefs which proceed from such engagements.

ARI. (*To Henriette*). Is this the only motive which makes you refuse the union with Clitandre?

HEN. Without this, you would find my heart leap at it; I refuse his hand only because I love him too well.

ARI. Then be bound by such beautiful chains. I have brought you only false tidings; and it is a trick, a surprising device, which I have put into practice to serve your love, to undeceive my sister, and show her what her philosopher would prove upon trial.

CH. Heaven be praised for it!

PHIL. I am glad at the vexation which it will give this base deserter. To see this match concluded with magnificence will be a punishment to his sordid meanness.



CH. (*To Clitandre*). I knew well enough that you would marry her.

AR. (*To Philaminte*). Then you sacrifice me to their love?

PHIL. It is not you whom I sacrifice to them ; and you have the support of philosophy to see with a satisfied eye their ardour crowned.

BEL. Let him beware, at least, that I am not dwelling in his heart. One marries often through sudden despair, and repents all one's life afterwards.

CH. (*To the Notary*). Come, Sir, follow the order which I have prescribed, and draw up the contract as I have told you.



**LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE.**

**COMÉDIE.**

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**THE IMAGINARY INVALID.**

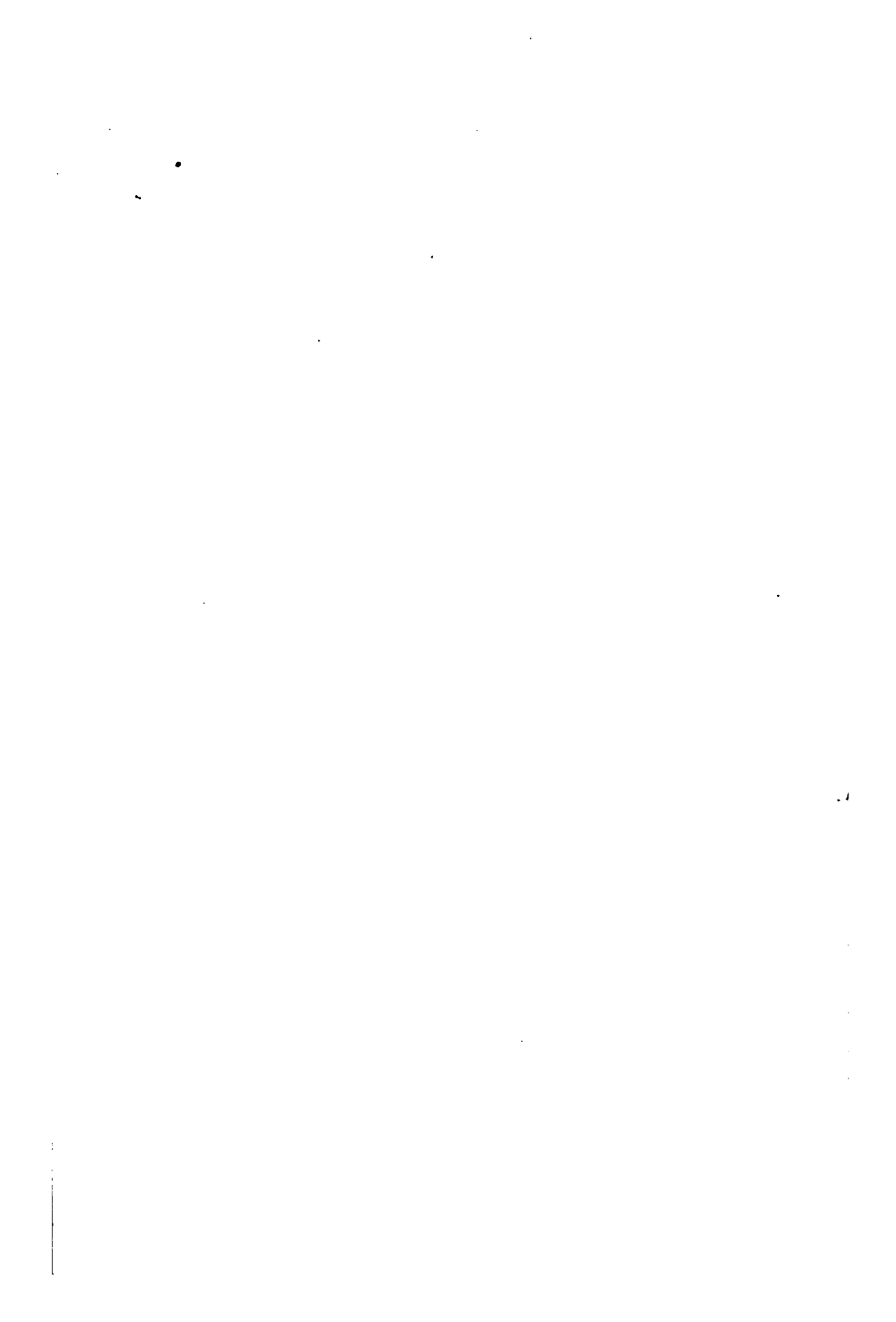
**A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.**

**INTERSPERSED WITH MUSIC AND DANCING.**

*(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)*

**FEBRUARY 10TH, 1673.**







Hogarth del.

W. Verelst.

# THE IMAGINARY INVALID.

ACT I. SC. I.



## LEAH C. CROLEY 201000

[illegible]





## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

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WHILST Molière was very ill and nearly dying, when he felt every day his strength failing him, and his life passing away rapidly, he wrote a comedy, *The Imaginary Invalid*, in which he depicts the folly of a man who, though in good health, believes himself ill, blindly obeys his doctor, and swallows and takes what he prescribes for him; in other words, the very counterpart of Molière himself. This comedy was first performed at the theatre of the Palais Royal, on the 10th of February, 1673. During the fourth representation, Molière became ill and died on the same evening, the 17th of February. The theatre did not open until the 24th of that month, with *The Misanthrope*, and with Baron in the part of Alceste. *The Imaginary Invalid* was performed again, with La Thorillière in the character of Argan, and was acted nine times. On the 4th of May 1674, it was acted anew, and had thirty-seven consecutive representations, whilst it was played before the court on the 19th of July of the same year. On the 19th of November it was brought out again, and played eleven times; so that it was represented in all sixty-two times—a proof that the public was not tired in admiring the last work of France's great dramatist. (In the character of Argan Molière endeavoured to sketch the excessive dread of death and its consequences, harshness of heart, tyrannical egotism, and an extreme facility for being deceived. Argan's wife, Béline, tyrannizes over him, Mr. Purgon and Mr. Fleurant rule him with a rod of iron, whilst Béralde, Argan's brother, is a sceptic in medicine, and probably is only the mouth-piece of the very arguments of Molière himself. The burlesque reception of Argan as a doctor, in the last interlude, is very similar to the real reception of a doctor, and it seems that some of Molière's medical friends assisted him in this description.) John Locke, who passed three years after Molière's death through Montpellier, was present at the examination of a physician, and the conferring of his degree, and describes a procession of the doctors dressed in red, with black caps on their heads, and followed by ten violin-players, the speech of the president against the circulation of the blood, the different compliments of the newly made doctor, and his putting on a cap, a ring on his finger, and a golden chain round his loins. In Paris there was no music when a doctor's degree was conferred.

Molière had flattered himself that *The Imaginary Invalid* should be

represented at court during the carnival of 1673, and the Prologue is sufficient evidence of this. But Louis XIV., who, during the preceding summer, had made his first campaign in Holland, had probably his mind filled with more or less heroic thoughts, and ordered the *Mithridates* of Racine, to be performed by the comedians of the hotel de Bourgogne; Lulli also made some opposition with regard to the music, which was forbidden to be played on any other stage than the Opera.

Dr. Martin Lister, an Englishman who was in Paris in 1698, says:—<sup>1</sup>

"It is said Molière died suddenly in acting the *Malade Imaginaire*; which is a good instance of his well personating the play he made, and how he could really put himself into any passion he had in his head. . . . He is reported to have said, going off the stage, '*Messieurs, J'ai joué le Malade Imaginaire, mais je suis véritablement fort malade*;' and he died two hours after. This account of Molière is not in his life by Perrault; but it is true; and yet he has blamed him for his folly, in persecuting the art of physic, not the men, in divers of his plays.

"Molière sent for Dr. M——, a physician of Paris of great esteem and worth, and now in London a refugee. Dr. M—— sent him word he would come to him, upon two conditions; the one, that he should answer him only to such questions as he should ask him, and not otherwise discourse him; the other, that he should oblige himself to take the medicines that he should prescribe for him. But Molière finding the doctor too hard for him, and not easily to be duped, refused them. His business, it seems, was to make a comical scene in exposing one of the most learned men of the profession, as he had done the quacks. If this was his intention, as in all probability it was, Molière had as much malice as wit; which is only to be used to correct the viciousness and folly of men pretending to knowledge, and not the arts themselves."

The words which Dr. Lister attributes to Molière as having been uttered by him on the stage, have never had any corroborative evidence. Who the Dr. M. may be, whom the learned English physician mentions, and who appears to have told him a cock-and-bull story, it is now impossible to find out; but the animus of Dr. Lister, and his spite against Molière, twenty-five years after the dramatist's death, is distinctly shown in the extract given above.

As the king had early in the year 1674 forbidden *The Imaginary Invalid* to become public property, until it was printed, and as the troupe of Molière did not hasten to publish it, several spurious editions soon saw the light. The first published at Amsterdam by D. Elzevir, in 1674, and probably written by some one who had seen the play in Paris, and wrote it down from memory, is absolutely valueless, except as indicating some stage play, and describing the dresses. A second surreptitious edition was published the same year, at Cologne, by J. Sambin, and appears to be so well done that it seems possible that the original manuscript has been consulted. But the comedy, as we now know it, was first published in the collected edition of Molière's works of La Grange and Vinot, in 1682. They were both friends of Molière, the first even a fellow-actor, and had consulted the manuscripts lent to them by his widow. The book of the ballet and the words of the physician's admission, that is the last interlude, had been separately published several times before.

In the eighth volume of "Select Comedies of M. de Molière," London, 1732, this play is translated under the name of the *Hypochondriack*, and dedicated to his Grace the Duke of Argyle, in the following words:—

<sup>1</sup> *A Journey to Paris in the year 1698.*

MY LORD,—By prefixing Your Grace's Name to this Performance I have quite ruined my Dedication, for both my Author's Character as a Writer, and your Grace's for fine Sense, Humanity, and Politeness, are so thoroughly known and so strongly established in the World, that it would be Impertinence and Presumption to say anything of either, Thus deprived of the two great Sources of an Epistle dedicatory, what can I do? why agreeable to the common Practice of my cotemporary Brethren I should have recourse to my own Abilities and the Merit of my Translation: But those, your Grace, I fear, will be too readily acquainted with, if You should give Yourself the trouble to cast an Eye upon what I have done; I shall therefore say one Word only in behalf of the Bookseller, and then give your Grace no further Trouble. This Volume completes the Select Collection of Molière's Comedies in French and English, to the success of which your Grace's Favour and Protection are absolutely necessary, and most humbly intreated. As the Intention of this Work is to introduce pure Nature and true Wit once more in our Diversions, and to chase Folly and Vice from our Conversations and Practice; a more proper Patron could not possibly be found to recommend it to the World, than one of your Grace's Taste and Virtues.—I am, my Lord, Your Grace's most obedient and most humble servant,

THE TRANSLATOR.

Several English dramatists have borrowed from Molière. Mrs. Aphra Behn has, in *Sir Patient Fancy*, acted at the theatre Dorset Garden, in 1678 (see Introductory Notice to *Love is the best Doctor*, Vol. II.,) partly imitated Argan in Sir Patient Fancy. A great portion of the fifth act is also taken from Molière; but the whole is wilfully indecent.

J. Miller's *Mother-in-Law, or the Doctor the Disease* (see Introductory Notice to *Monsieur de Pourcaugnac*, Vol. III., page 85), which was brought out at the Haymarket Theatre on the 12th of February 1734, is based chiefly on Molière's play *The Imaginary Invalid*.

Isaac Bickerstaffe wrote *Dr. Last in his Chariot*, a comedy performed at the Haymarket Theatre, on the 25th of August 1769 (see Introductory Notice to *Love is the best Doctor*, Vol. II, page 137), of which the bulk is taken from *The Imaginary Invalid*. Argan is called Ailwou'd; Béralde, Friendly; Cléante, Hargrave; Béline, Mrs. Ailwou'd; Angélique, Nancy; Louison, Polly; and Toinette is changed into a man-servant, called Wag.

## PROLOGUE.

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After the glorious fatigues and the victorious exploits of our august monarch, it is quite right that those who write should labour either to praise or to amuse him. That is what we have wished to do here ; and this prologue is an attempt to praise this grand prince, which serves to introduce the comedy of *The Imaginary Invalid*, of which the purpose was to give him relief from his noble works.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### IN THE COMEDY.

<p>ARGAN, <i>an imaginary invalid</i>.<sup>2</sup>          BERALDE, <i>his brother</i>.<sup>3</sup>          CLEANTE, <i>Angelique's lover</i>.<sup>4</sup>          MR. PURGON, <i>Argan's physician</i>.          MR. DIAFOIRUS, <i>a physician</i>.          THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, <i>his son,</i>              <i>betrothed to Angelique</i>.<sup>5</sup></p>	<p>MR. FLEURANT, <i>an apothecary</i>.<sup>6</sup>          MR. DE BONNEFOI, <i>a notary</i>.          BELINE, <i>Argan's second wife</i>.          ANGELIQUE, <i>Argan's daughter</i>.          LOUISON (<i>a little girl</i>), <i>Argan's daughter</i>.          TOINETTE, <i>a servant</i>.</p>
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### IN THE PROLOGUE.

FLORA. TWO DANCING ZEPHYRS. CLIMENE. DAPHNE.  
 TIRCIS, *Climene's lover, chief of a troop of shepherds*.  
 DORILAS, *Daphne's lover, chief of a troop of shepherds*.  
 SHEPHERDS and SHEPHERDESSES *of the suite of Tircis*.  
 SHEPHERDS and SHEPHERDESSES *of the suite of Dorilas*.  
 PAN.  
 FAUNS (*dancing*).

### IN THE INTERLUDES.

#### *First Act.*

PUNCH. AN OLD WOMAN. VIOLIN-PLAYERS.  
 ARCHERS (*dancing and singing*).

#### *Second Act.*

FOUR SINGING GIPSIES. OTHER SINGING AND DANCING GIPSIES.

#### *Third Act.*

<p>SINGING UPHOLSTERERS.          THE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY.          PHYSICIANS.          ARGAN.</p>	<p>BACHELOR.          APOTHECARIES (<i>with their mortars and pestles</i>).          SURGEONS.          SYRINGE-BEARERS.</p>
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*Scene.—PARIS.*

<sup>2</sup> This part was played by Molière. According to the description of the dresses given in the first surreptitious publication of this comedy, by Daniel Elzevir, Amsterdam, 1674, "Argan was arrayed as an invalid, coarse stockings, slippers, a tight pair of breeches, a red waistcoat with some embroidery or lace, a neckerchief with old lace negligently fastened, a night-cap with a lace skull-cap."

<sup>3</sup> Dressed as a modest cavalier.

<sup>4</sup> Dressed as a gallant and a lover.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Diafoirus, his son, and Mr. Purgon are all dressed in black; the first two as ordinary physicians, and the last with a large smooth collar, having long sleek hair, and a cloak coming below his knees.

<sup>6</sup> He is also dressed in black or brownish grey, with a short apron, and a clyster in his hand, without a hat.



## THE IMAGINARY INVALID.

(*LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE*).

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### *ECLOGUE WITH MUSIC AND DANCING.*

*The Scene represents a rustic, pleasant spot.*

*Scene I.—Flora, Two Zephyrs, dancing.*

FLO.    Leave, leave your flocks ;  
          Come shepherds, shepherdesses all ;  
          Assemble 'neath these youthful elms :  
          I have come to announce to you sweet tidings,  
          Wherewith these hamlets to rejoice.  
          Leave, leave your flocks ;  
          Come shepherds, shepherdesses all ;  
          Assemble 'neath these youthful elms.

*Scene II.—Flora, Two Zephyrs dancing ; Clémène,  
          Daphné, Tircis, Dorilas.*

CLI. (*To Tircis*).    DAPH. (*To Dorilas*).  
          Leave your protestations, shepherd :  
          It is Flora who now calls.

TIR. (*To Clémène*).    DOR. (*To Daphné*).  
          But cruel one, tell me at least,  
          If by a little friendship, you will repay my vows.

TIR. If you will be sensible of my faithful ardour.

CLI. AND DAPH. It is Flora who now calls.

TIR. AND DOR. It is but a word, a word, a word only that I crave.

TIR. Shall I for ever languish in my mortal pain ?

DOR. May I hope that one day you shall make me happy ?

CLI. AND DAPH. It is Flora who now calls.

*Scene III. — Flora, Two Zephyrs dancing; Climène, Daphné, Tircis, Dorilas, Shepherds and Shepherdesses, of the suite of Tircis and Dorilas, dancing and singing.*

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

*All the Shepherds and Shepherdesses place themselves around Flora, keeping time to the music.*

CLI. What news is that, O goddess,  
That amongst us is to diffuse so much joy ?

DAPH. We burn to learn from you,  
These important tidings.

DOR. Eagerly we all sigh for it.

CLI., DAPH., TIR., DOR.

With impatience we die for it.

FLO. Here it is ; silence, silence,  
Your prayers have been granted, Louis is  
returned ;

In these spots he brings back pleasures and  
love,

And you behold an end to your mortal alarms.  
By his vast exploits, he sees everything sub-  
jected :

He lays down his arms,  
Failing foes.

CHORUS. Ah ! what sweet news !

How grand it is, how beautiful it is !

What pleasure ! what laughter ! what sports !  
what happy successes !

And how well Heaven has fulfilled our wishes !

Ah ! what sweet news !

How grand it is ! how beautiful it is !



*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

*All the Shepherds and Shepherdesses express by their dances,  
the transports of their joy.*

- FLO. From your rural pipes  
Evoke the sweetest sounds ;  
Louis offers to your songs  
The most beautiful subject.  
After a hundred battles,  
In which his arm  
Reaps an ample victory,  
Form amongst you  
A hundred battles still more sweet,  
To sing his glory.
- CHORUS. Let us form amongst us  
A hundred battles still more sweet,  
To sing his glory.
- FLO. My youthful lover, in these woods,  
From my empire prepares a present,  
As a prize for the voice  
Who shall best succeed in telling us  
The virtue and the exploits  
Of the most august of kings.

CLI. If Tircis has the advantage.

DAPH. If Dorilas conqueror be.

CLI. To cherish him I promise.

DAPH. To his ardour I will give myself.

TIR. Oh hope too dear !

DOR. Oh word replete with sweetness !

TIR. AND DOR. Could grander subject, sweeter reward  
animate a heart ?

*The violins play an air to animate the two shepherds to the  
competition, while Flora, as umpire, places herself, with two  
Zephyrs, at the foot of a beautiful tree in the middle of the  
stage, and the rest occupy the two sides, as spectators.*

- TIR. When the melted snow swells a famous torrent,  
Against the sudden effort of its frothy waves  
There is nothing sufficiently solid ;  
Dykes, castles, towns, and woods,

Men and flocks at one and the same time,  
 All things bend to the current which guides it :  
 Such, and fiercer, and more rapid still  
 Louis marches in his exploits.

*Third Entry of the Ballet.*

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses at Tircis' side dance  
 round him, to the measure of a ritornello, to express  
 their applause.*

DOR. The threatening lightning that with fury pierces  
 The horrible darkness, by a fiery glow,  
 Causes, with fear and terror,  
 The most steadfast heart to tremble ;  
 But, at the head of an army,  
 Louis inspires more terror still.

*Fourth Entry of the Ballet.*

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses at Dorilas' side do the  
 same thing as the others have done.*

TIR. We see the fabulous exploits which Greece has  
 sung,  
 Effaced by many grander truths ;  
 And all these famous demi-gods  
 Whom past history vaunts,  
 Are not even to our thoughts  
 What Louis is in our eyes.

*Fifth Entry of the Ballet.*

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses once more do the same  
 thing that the others have done.*

DOR. In our days, Louis, by his astonishing feats,  
 Makes us believe the grand deeds which history  
 has sung  
 Of by-gone ages ;  
 But our nephews, in their glory,  
 Shall have nothing that can make believe  
 All the grand feats of Louis.

*Sixth Entry of the Ballet.*

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses at Dorilas' side again do  
 the same things.*

*Seventh Entry of the Ballet.*

*The Shepherds and Shepherdesses on both sides mingle and dance together.*

*Scene VI.—Flora, Pan; Two Zephyrs dancing; Climène, Daphné, Tircis, Dorilas, Fauns dancing, Shepherds and Shepherdesses dancing and singing.*

PAN. Abandon, abandon, shepherds, this bold design,  
 Eh ! what would you do ?  
 Sing on your pipes  
 What Apollo, on his lyre,  
 With his most lovely songs,  
 Would not undertake to say ?  
 It is giving too much flight to the fire that inspires  
       you,  
 It is mounting towards the sky on waxen wings,  
 To drop down to the bottom of the deep,  
 To sing the intrepid courage of Louis,  
 There is no voice that is learned enough,  
 There are no words grand enough to describe it ;  
 Silence is the language  
 That must laud his exploits.  
 Consecrate other cares to his signal victory ;  
 Your praises have naught that flatters his desires :  
 Leave, leave his glory ;  
 Think of nothing but his pleasures.

CHOR. Leave, leave his glory ;  
 Think of nothing but his pleasures.

FLO. (*To Tircis and to Dorilas*).  
 Although, to laud his immortal virtues,  
 Strength may fail your minds,  
 Both may receive the prize.  
 In grand and beauteous things  
 It is sufficient to have tried.

*Eighth Entry of the Ballet.*

*The two Zephyrs dance with two chaplets of flowers in their hands, which they afterwards give to the two Shepherds.*

CLI. AND DAPH. (*Giving their lovers their hands*).  
 In grand and beauteous things,  
 It is sufficient to have tried.

TIR. AND DOR. Ah ! with what sweet rewards our bold-  
ness has been crowned !

FLO. AND PAN. What one does for Louis is never lost.

CLI., DAPH., TIR., DOR.

Let us give ourselves henceforth to the  
care for his pleasures.

FLO. AND PAN. Happy, happy, who can devote his life  
to him !

CHORUS. In these woods let us mingle

Our flutes and our voices ;

This day invites us to it.

And let us make the echoes resound a thou-  
sand times,

Louis is the greatest of kings,

Happy, happy who can devote his life to him !

*Ninth Entry of the Ballet.*

*Fauns, Shepherds, and Shepherdesses all mingle together to  
execute a dance ; after which they go to prepare  
themselves for the Comedy.*

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### ANOTHER PROLOGUE.<sup>1</sup>

SCENE I.—*A Shepherdess singing.*

Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera,

Vain and not very learned doctors ;

You cannot cure, by your grand Latin words,

The grief that causes my despair.

Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera.

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<sup>1</sup> This second prologue is not in the libretto of the ballet. It was probably often used, both for shortness' sake, and because it announces the subject of the Comedy, and is to be found in the Amsterdam edition. It is preceded by the following description :—

The theatre represents a forest. When the stage is seen, an agreeable noise of instruments is heard. Afterwards, a Shepherdess comes to complain tenderly that she finds no remedy for the pangs which she suffers. Several Fauns and Egyptians, assembled for their peculiar festival and games, meet the Shepherdess. They listen to her complaints, and form a very amusing spectacle. Complaint of the Shepherdess ;—

Alas ! alas ! I dare not reveal  
My love-sick martyrdom  
To the shepherd for whom I sigh,  
And who alone can relieve me.  
Do not pretend to put an end to it,  
Ignorant doctors, you would not know how to do it :  
Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera.

These uncertain remedies, of which the simple people  
Think that you know the admirable virtue,  
Cannot cure the ills I feel :  
And all your gibberish can be received  
Only by an *Imaginary Invalid*.  
Your highest knowledge is but pure chimera,  
Vain and little informed doctors, etc.

*The Scene changes, and represents an apartment.*

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—ARGAN, seated before a table, is adding up his  
apothecary's bill with counters.

AR. Three and two make five, and five make ten, and  
ten make twenty ; three and two make five. " Besides,  
on the twenty-fourth,<sup>8</sup> a small clyster, mild, preparative  
and soothing, to soothe, moisten, and refresh Mr. Argan's  
inward parts." What pleases me in Mr. Fleurant, my  
apothecary, is that his bills are always so civil. " Mr.  
Argan's inward parts, thirty sols." Yes ; but, Mr. Fleu-  
rant, to be civil is not everything ; you should also be  
moderate, and not flay your patients. Thirty sols an  
enema ! I am your humble servant, I have already told  
you ; in your other bills you have put them at only twenty  
sols ; and twenty sols in apothecary's language means ten  
sols ; here they are, ten sols. " Besides, on the said date,  
a good cleaning clyster, composed of double catholicon,  
rhubarb, with honey of roses, and other ingredients,

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<sup>8</sup> As Argan's verification of medicine delivered during the entire month  
would be too long, the curtain rises when he is at the twenty-fourth day.

according to prescription, to scour, wash and clean the lower abdomen of Mr. Argan, thirty sols." By your leave, ten sols. "Besides, on the said date, in the evening, a julep for the liver, soporative and soporific, composed to make Mr. Argan sleep, thirty-five sols." I do not complain of this, for it made me sleep very well. Ten, fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen sols, six deniers.<sup>9</sup> "Besides, on the twenty-fifth, a good purgative and strengthening draught, composed of fresh cassia, with Levantine senna, and other ingredients, according to the prescription of Mr. Purgon, to expel and evacuate Mr. Argan's bile, four francs." Ah! Mr. Fleurant, this is too much of a joke: one should give and take with patients. Mr. Purgon did not order you to put down four francs. Put down, put down three francs, if you please. Twenty and thirty sols.<sup>10</sup> "Besides, on the same date, an anodyne and astringent potion, to procure Mr. Argan some rest, thirty sols." Good, ten and fifteen sols.<sup>11</sup> "Besides, on the twenty-sixth, a carminative clyster, to drive away Mr. Argan's flatulence, thirty sols." Ten sols, Mr. Fleurant. "Besides the same clyster, repeated in the evening, as above, thirty sols." Mr. Fleurant, ten sols. "Besides, on the twenty-seventh, a good draught to hasten and drive out the bad humours of Mr. Argan, three livres." Good, twenty and thirty sols; I am glad that you are reasonable. "Besides, on the twenty-eighth, a small dose of clarified and edulcorated milk, to soften, temper, refresh, and purify Mr. Argan's blood, twenty sols." Good, ten sols.<sup>12</sup> Besides, a cordial and preservative potion, composed of twelve grains of bezoar, syrup of lemon and pomegranates, and other ingredients, according to prescription, five livres." Ah! Mr. Fleurant, gently if you please, if you go on thus, one would no longer care to be ill: be satisfied with four francs; twenty and forty sols. Three and two make

<sup>9</sup> Argan always puts down half of what the apothecary asks. Although the julep has done him good, he puts down only seventeen sous, six deniers,—half of Mr. Fleurant's charge, which was thirty-five sous.

<sup>10</sup> Here Argan puts down again the half of the three francs, the apothecary's charge, and says "thirty sols." He first marks with his counters twenty sols, and then adds ten more, which make thirty, but never thought of putting down fifty.

<sup>11</sup> See note above.

<sup>12</sup> See note above.

five, and five make ten, and ten make twenty. Sixty-three livres, four sols, and six deniers. So that, this month, I have taken, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven and eight remedies; and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven and twelve enemas; and the other month, there were twelve remedies and twenty enemas. I am not surprised that I am not so well this month as the other. I had better tell this to Mr. Purgon, so that he may set this matter to rights. Come, take all this away. (*Seeing that no one comes, that there are none of his servants in the room*). There is no one here. I may say what I like, I am always left alone: there is no means of making them stay here. (*After having rung a bell that is on the table*). They do not hear, and my bell does not make sufficient noise. Tingle, tingle, tingle.<sup>13</sup> Not a bit of use. Tingle, tingle, tingle! They are deaf. . . . Toinette! Tingle, tingle, tingle. Just as if I did not ring at all. You wretch! you slut! Tingle, tingle, tingle.<sup>14</sup> I am in a rage! Tingle, tingle, tingle! To the devil with you, baggage! Is it possible that they can leave a poor invalid by himself in this way? Tingle, tingle, tingle. This is most wretched. Tingle, tingle, tingle! Ah! good Heavens! they will leave me to die here! tingle, tingle, tingle.

## SCENE II.—ARGAN, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Entering*). Coming, coming.

ARG. Ah! slut! ah! baggage. . .

TOI. (*Pretends to have knocked her head*). The deuce take your impatience! You hurry people so, that I have given myself a great knock on the head against the outside corner of the shutter.

ARG. (*Angry*). Ah! you wretch! . . .

TOI. (*Interrupting him*). Ah!

ARG. It is an . . .

TOI. Ah! . . .

ARG. It is an hour . . .

<sup>13</sup> In the original, *Drelin*, a word invented to imitate the sound of a bell when rung.

<sup>14</sup> Argan no longer rings his bell, but shouts.

TOI. Ah !

ARG. That you have left me . . .

TOI. Ah !

ARG. Hold your tongue, you slut, that I may scold you.

TOI. Upon my word, I like that. I should advise you to do so, after what I have just done to myself.

ARG. You have given me a sore throat, you slut.

TOI. And you have given me a broken head : one is as good as the other. We are quits, if you like.

ARG. What ! you baggage . . .

TOI. If you scold, I shall cry.

ARG. To leave me, you wretch . . .

TOI. (*Once more interrupting Argan*). Ah !

ARG. You slut ! . . . you wish me to . . .

TOI. Ah !

ARG. What ! I am not to have the pleasure of scolding her !

TOI. Scold as much as you like : I am agreeable.

ARG. You prevent me, you slut, by interrupting me at every point.

TOI. If you have the pleasure of scolding, I may, on my side, have the pleasure of crying : each his own ; that is not too much. Ah !

ARG. Come, I shall have to do without it. Take this away, you wretch, take this away. (*After having risen*). Has my enema of to-day acted well ?

TOI. Your enema ?

ARG. Yes. Had I much bile ?

TOI. Upon my word, I do not meddle with these things, it is for Mr. Fleurant to put his nose into them, since he profits by them.

ARG. Let them take care to keep some beef-tea ready for me, for the other which I am to take by-and-bye.

TOI. This Mr. Fleurant, and this Mr. Purgon amuse themselves very much with your body ; they have a good milch-cow in you ; and I should much like to ask them what disease you have, to want so many remedies.

ARG. Hold your tongue, you ignorant woman ; it is not for you to control the prescriptions of the faculty. Send my daughter Angélique to me : I have something to say to her.



TOI. Here she comes of her own accord ; she has guessed your thought.

SCENE III.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

ARG. Come here, Angélique : you come opportunely ; I wished to speak to you.

AN. Behold me ready to listen to you.

ARG. Wait. (*To Toinette*). Give me my stick. I shall be back in a moment.

TOI. Go quickly, Sir, go. Mr. Fleurant gives us some work.

SCENE IV.—ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

AN. Toinette !

TOI. What !

AN. Just look at me.

TOI. Well ! I am looking at you.

AN. Toinette !

TOI. Well ! what, Toinette ?

AN. Cannot you guess what I wish to speak about ?

TOI. I have my doubts about it : of our young lover ; for it is on him that for six days all our conversations turn ; and you are not at your ease, unless you talk of him at every moment.

AN. Since you know that, why are you not the first to converse with me about it ? And why do you not save me the trouble of dragging you into this conversation ?

TOI. You do not give me time to do so ; and you are so anxious about it, that it becomes difficult to forestall you.

AN. I confess to you that I cannot tire of speaking of him to you, and that my heart warmly takes advantage of every moment to open itself to you. But tell me, Toinette, do you condemn the sentiments which I have for him ?

TOI. I have no such thoughts.

AN. Am I wrong in abandoning myself to these sweet impressions ?

TOI. I do not say so.

AN. And would you have me be insensible to the tender protestations of this ardent passion which he shows for me ?

TOI. Heaven forbid !

AN. Just tell me ; do not you see, with me, something from Heaven, some working of destiny, in the unexpected adventure of our acquaintance ?

TOI. Yes.

AN. Do not you find that this action of taking up my defence, without knowing me, is altogether that of a gentleman ?

TOI. Yes.

AN. That one could not have behaved more generously ?

TOI. Agreed.

AN. And that he did all this with the best possible grace ?

TOI. Oh ! yes.

AN. Do not you think, Toinette, that he is well made in person ?

TOI. Assuredly.

AN. That he has the finest appearance in the world ?

TOI. No doubt.

AN. That his conversations, like his actions, have something noble ?

TOI. That is certain.

AN. That there could be nothing more passionate than what he says to me ?

TOI. It is true.

AN. And that there is nothing more annoying than the restraint under which I am kept, which stops all interchange of the sweet eagerness of this mutual affection with which Heaven inspires us ?

TOI. You are right.

AN. But, my dear Toinette, think you that he loves me as well as he says to me ?

TOI. Eh ! eh ! these things are sometimes a little to be doubted. The vain pretences of love are very like the truth ; and I have seen some great actors on that subject.

AN. Ah ! Toinette, what are you saying there ? Alas ! from the way he speaks, could it well be possible that he does not tell me the truth ?

TOI. At any rate, you will be soon enlightened ; and the resolve, of which he wrote to you yesterday, that he

had taken to ask for your hand, is a prompt way to show you whether he loves you or not.<sup>15</sup> That will be the right proof.

AN. Ah! Toinette, if this one deceives me, I shall never in my life believe another man.

TOI. Here is your father coming back.

SCENE V.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

ARG. Daughter, I am going to tell you some news which, perhaps, you did not expect. You are being asked in marriage. What is this? You laugh? That is pleasant, yes, this word marriage! There is nothing more funny to young girls. Ah! nature, nature! From what I can perceive, daughter, I need hardly ask you, whether you would like to get married.

AN. I must do all, father, that it pleases you to order me.

ARG. I am glad to have so obedient a daughter: so the matter is settled, and I have promised your hand.

AN. It is for me, father, blindly to follow all your wishes.

ARG. My wife, your step-mother, wished me to make you a nun, as well as your little sister Louison; and she has always persisted in it.

TOI. (*Aside*). The innocent has her reasons.

ARG. She would not consent to this marriage; but I have carried the day, and I have given my word.

AN. Ah! father, how obliged I am to you for all your goodness!

TOI. (*To Argan*). Truly, I like you for this; and this is the most sensible thing you ever did in all your life.

ARG. I have not yet seen the gentleman; but I have been told that I should be satisfied with him, and you also.

AN. Assuredly, father.

ARG. How! have you seen him?

AN. Since your consent authorizes me to open my heart to you, I will not dissemble, but tell you that accident

<sup>15</sup> Toinette prepares us for the mistake of the next scene, by informing us that Cléante had asked for the hand of Angélique. In the third act we shall see, however, that he had asked Béralde to do so.

made us acquainted six days ago, and that the request which has been made to you is the result of the inclination, which we, at this first sight, have conceived for each other.

ARG. They did not tell me this: but I am very glad of it, and it is much better that matters are so. They tell me that he is a tall young man, well made.

AN. Yes, father.

ARG. Of good stature.

AN. No doubt.

ARG. Agreeable in person.

AN. Assuredly.

ARG. Good-looking.

AN. Very much so.

ARG. Steady and well born.

AN. Quite.

ARG.. Well bred.

AN. Could not possibly be better.

ARG. Who speaks Latin and Greek well.

AN. That is what I do not know.

ARG. And that he will take his diploma as a physician in three days.

AN. He, father?

ARG. Yes. Has he not told you?

AN. No indeed. Who told you?

ARG. Mr. Purgon.

AN. Does Mr. Purgon know him?

ARG. A pretty question! He should know him, seeing that he is his nephew.

AN. Cléante, the nephew of Mr. Purgon?

ARG. Which Cléante? We are speaking of the one who has asked you in marriage.

AN. Well! yes.

ARG. Well! he is the nephew of Mr. Purgon, the son of his brother-in-law Dr. Diafoirus; and this son's name is Thomas Diafoirus, and not Cléante; and we have settled this match this morning, Mr. Purgon, Mr. Fleurant, and I; and to-morrow this intended son-in-law is to be brought to me by his father. What is the matter? You look altogether amazed!

AN. It is father, because I find that you have been speaking of one person, and that I understood another.

TOI. What! Sir, you could have formed that ridiculous design? And, with all the wealth you have, you would marry your daughter to a physician?

ARG. Yes. What are you interfering with, you slut, impudent hussy that you are?

TOI. Good gracious! gently. You begin immediately with invectives. Can we not argue together without getting into a passion? There, let us speak in cool blood. What is your reason, if you please, for such a match?

ARG. My reason is that, seeing myself infirm and ill as I am, I wish to have a son-in-law and relations who are physicians, so as to have the support of good assistance against my illness, to have in my own family the sources of the remedies which are necessary to me, and to be in a position of having consultations and prescriptions.

TOI. Well! that is giving your reason, and it is a pleasure to answer each other gently. But, Sir, consult your own conscience. Are you ill?

ARG. How! you wretch! am I ill! Am I ill, impudent hussey!

TOI. Well! yes, Sir; you are ill, let us not quarrel about that. Yes, you are very ill, I am agreed, and more ill than you imagine; that is settled. But your daughter must marry a husband for herself; and, not being ill, it is not necessary to give her a doctor.

ARG. It is for me that I give her this doctor; and a well disposed daughter ought to be delighted to marry that which is useful to the health of her father.

TOI. Upon my word, Sir, shall I as a friend give you an advice?

ARG. What is it, this advice?

TOI. Not to think of this marriage.

ARG. And the reason?

TOI. The reason is, that your daughter will not consent to it.

ARG. She will not consent to it?

TOI. No.

ARG. My daughter?

TOI. Your daughter. She will tell you that she has nothing to do with Mr. Diafoirus, nor with his son

Thomas Diafoirus, nor with any of the Diafoiruses in the world.

ARG. I have to do with them, besides that the match is more advantageous than the world imagines. Mr. Diafoirus has no other heir than this son ; and, what is more, Mr. Purgon, who has neither wife nor child, leaves him all his property in consideration of this marriage, and Mr. Purgon is a man who has eight thousand livres a-year.

TOI. He must have killed a good many people, to have made himself so rich !

ARG. Eight thousand livres a-year are something, without reckoning the father's property.

TOI. All that is well and good, Sir ; but I am always coming back to this : I advise you, between ourselves, to choose her another husband ; and she is not made to be Mrs. Diafoirus.

ARG. And I wish it to be so.

TOI. Eh, fie ! do not say so.

ARG. How ! do not say so.

TOI. Eh, no.

ARG. And why should I not say so ?

TOI. One would say you are not thinking of what you are saying.

X ARG. One may say what one likes ; but I tell you that it is my wish that she shall fulfil my given promise.

TOI. No ; I am sure that she will not do so.

ARG. I will force her to do so.

TOI. She will not do so, I tell you.

ARG. She shall do so, or I shall put her in a convent.

TOI. You ?

ARG. I.

TOI. Good !

ARG. How ! good ?

TOI. You will not put her in a convent.

ARG. I will not put her in a convent ?

TOI. No.

ARG. No ?

TOI. No.

ARG. Hoity toity ! This is pleasant ! I shall not put my daughter in a convent, if I wish it ?

TOI. No ; I tell you.

ARG. Who shall prevent me?

TOI. Yourself.

ARG. I!

TOI. Yes. You will not have the heart.

ARG. I shall have it.

TOI. You are jesting.

ARG. I am not jesting at all.

TOI. Your paternal tenderness will prevent you.

ARG. It will not prevent me.

TOI. A little tear or two, arms thrown round the neck, "My darling little papa," tenderly pronounced, will be enough to touch you.

ARG. All that will have no effect.

TOI. Yes, yes.

ARG. I tell you that I shall not go back from it.

TOI. Nonsense.

ARG. You must not say, Nonsense.

TOI. Good Heavens! I know you, you are naturally kind-hearted.

ARG. (*Getting angry*). I am not kind-hearted, and I am very spiteful when I wish to be so.<sup>16</sup>

TOI. Gently, Sir. You forget that you are ill.

ARG. I absolutely command her to prepare herself to take the husband I tell her.

TOI. And I absolutely forbid her to do anything of the kind.

ARG. Where in the world are we? and in what sort of audacity is this, for a slut of a servant to talk in this manner before her master?

TOI. When a master forgets what he is doing, a sensible servant has a right to correct him.

ARG. (*Running after Toinette*). Ah! you insolent hussy, I shall have to knock you down.

TOI. (*Avoiding Argan, placing a chair between herself and him*). It is my duty to oppose myself to things which might disgrace you.

ARG. (*Running round the chair, with his stick, after Toinette*). Come here, come, that I may teach you how to speak.

<sup>16</sup> This dialogue is copied almost literally from the Sixth Scene of the First Act of *The Rogueries of Scapin*.

TOI. (*Dodging away at the opposite side*). I interest myself, as I ought to do, not to let you commit any folly.

ARG. (*Same business*). You slut!

TOI. (*Same business*). No, I shall never consent to this marriage.

ARG. (*Same business*). You good-for-nothing.

TOI. (*Same business*). I will not have her marry your Thomas Diafoirus.

ARG. (*Same business*). Baggage!

TOI. (*Same business*). She will obey me rather than you.

ARG. (*Stopping*). Angélique, will you not stop this slut for me?

AN. Eh! father, do not make yourself ill.

ARG. (*To Angélique*). If you do not stop her for me, I will give you my curse.

TOI. (*Going*). And I shall disinherit her, if she obeys you.

ARG. (*Throwing himself in his chair*). Ah! Ah! I am exhausted. This is enough to kill me.<sup>17</sup>

#### SCENE VI.—BÉLINE, ARGAN.

ARG. Ah! wife, come here.

BEL. What ails you, my poor husband?

ARG. Come here to my assistance.

BEL. But what is the matter, dear?

ARG. My darling!

BEL. My pet!

ARG. I have been put into a passion.

BEL. Alas! poor dear husband! But how, my friend?

ARG. Your slut of a Toinette has been more insolent than ever.

BEL. Do not excite yourself.

ARG. She has put me into a rage, my dear.

BEL. Gently, my son.

ARG. During an hour, she has opposed the things which I wish to do.

BEL. There, there, gently.

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<sup>17</sup> Compare the Second Scene of the Second Act of *Tartuffe*. (See Vol. II.)



ARG. And she has had the effrontery to tell me that I am not ill.

BEL. She is an impertinent hussey.

ARG. You know, my heart, what is the case.

BEL. Yes, my heart, she is wrong.

ARG. My love, this wretch will kill me.

BEL. Eh! eh!

ARG. She is the cause of all my bile.

BEL. Do not get so angry.

ARG. And I have told you, I do not know how often, to get rid of her.

BEL. Good Heavens! child, there are neither men nor women servants who have not their faults. One is often obliged to put up with their bad qualities, for the sake of their good ones. This one is handy, careful, diligent, and above all faithful; and you know that we must be very cautious now-a-days with the folks we take.<sup>18</sup> Hullo! Toinette!

SCENE VII.—ARGAN, BÉLINE, TOINETTE.

TOI. Madam.

BEL. Why do you put my husband into a passion?

TOI. (*In a coaxing tone*). I, Madam? Alas! I do not know what you mean, and I strive to please master in everything.

ARG. Oh! the wretch!

TOI. He told us that he wished to give his daughter in marriage to the son of Mr. Diafoirus: I answered him that I thought that the match was advantageous to her, but that I believed he would do better to put her into a convent.

BEL. There is not much harm in that, and I think that she is right.

ARG. Ah! my love, do you believe her? She is a good-for-nothing; she has said a hundred insolent things to me.

BEL. Well! I believe you, my friend. There, calm yourself. Listen, Toinette: if ever you vex my husband,

<sup>18</sup> This defence of Toinette by Béline shows that she afterwards intends to use her; but we have already seen in the servant's exclamation "What an innocent woman!" that Toinette knows her well.

I will put you out of the house. There, now give me his furred cloak and some pillows, that I may make him comfortable in his chair. You are I do not know how. Pull your cap well over your ears : there is nothing that gives cold like catching a draught in the ears.

ARG. Ah ! my dear, how obliged I am for all the care you take of me.

BEL. (*Arranging the pillows which she puts round Argan*). Just lift yourself, that I may put this under you. Let us place this one to lean upon, and that one on the other side. Let us put this one behind your back, and the other one to support your head.

TOI. (*Rudely putting a pillow on his head*). And this one to keep the night dew away from you.

ARG. (*Rising and throwing his pillows at Toinette, who runs away*). Ah, you wretch ! you want to stifle me.

#### SCENE VIII.—ARGAN, BÉLINE.

BEL. Hullo ! hullo ! What is the matter now ?

ARG. (*Throwing himself into his chair*). Ah ! ah ! ah ! I am exhausted.

BEL. Why get into such a passion ? She thought of doing right.

ARG. My love, you do not know the spitefulness of the good-for-nothing. Ah ! she has entirely put me out ; and I shall want more than eight doses of medicine and twelve enemas to put all this right.

BEL. There, there, my little dear, try to quiet yourself a little.

ARG. My darling, you are my only consolation.

BEL. Poor dear child !

ARG. To try to acknowledge the love which you have for me, my heart, I wish, as I have told you, to make my will.

BEL. Ah, my friend, do not let us speak of this, I pray ; I cannot bear the thought ; and the very word, will, makes me shudder with pain.

ARG. I had told you to speak about it to your notary.

BEL. He is just inside. I brought him with me.

ARG. Make him come in, my love.

BEL. Alas! my friend, when one loves a husband well, one is hardly able to think of all this.

SCENE IX.—MR. DE BONNEFOI, BÉLINE, ARGAN.

ARG. Draw near, Mr. de Bonnefoi; draw near. Take a seat, if you please. My wife has told me, Sir, that you are a very honest man, and altogether her friend; and I have told her to speak to you about a will which I wish to make.

BEL. Alas! I am not able to talk of these matters.

MR. DE B. She has explained your intentions to me, Sir, and what you purpose to do for her; and I must tell you on this score that you cannot give anything to your wife by your will.

ARG. But why?

MR. DE B. Common law is opposed to it. If you were in a country where there is statute law, it could be done; but in Paris, and in all the countries where common law exists, at least in most of them, this cannot be; and the disposition would be invalid. All the good which man and woman joined in wedlock can do to each other, is a mutual gift while living; and then there must be no children, either of the two contracting parties, or of one of them, at the time of decease of the one who dies first.<sup>19</sup>

ARG. This is a very impertinent custom, that a husband can leave nothing to a wife by whom he is tenderly beloved, and who takes so much care of him! I would feel inclined to consult my barrister, to see how I might act.

MR. DE B. It is not to barristers that you must go; for they are, as a rule, very strict on these matters, and imagine that it is a great crime to dispose of property contrary to law: they are people of difficulties, who are ignorant of the intricacies of one's conscience. There are other people to consult, who are very much more accommodating, who have expedients to glide gently over the law, and to make that right which is not allowed; who know how to smooth the difficulties of an affair, and to find means of eluding custom by some indirect advantage.

<sup>19</sup> This is according to articles 280 and 282 of the ancient Common Law of Paris.

Without this, where should we be every day? There must be some elasticity in affairs; otherwise we should do nothing, and I would not give a halfpenny for our profession.

ARG. My wife has indeed told me, Sir, that you are a very able and a very honest man. How am I to do, if you please, to give her my property, and to deprive my children of it?

MR. DE B. How are you to do? You can quietly choose an intimate friend of your wife's, to whom you will give, in due form, by your will, all that you can; and this friend shall afterwards give it all back to her. You can also contract a great many plausible obligations for the benefit of various creditors who will lend their names to your wife, and into whose hands they will put a declaration that what they did was only to benefit her. You can also, while you are alive, put into her hands ready money, or bills which you may make payable to the bearer.

BEL. Good Heavens! you must not torment yourself about all that. If you should happen to die, I should no longer remain in this world.

ARG. My darling!

BEL. Yes, my friend, if I am unfortunate enough to lose you . . .

ARG. My dear wife!

BEL. Life will no longer be anything to me.

ARG. My love!

BEL. And I shall follow you, to show the tenderness I have for you.

ARG. My darling, you rend my heart! Console yourself, I pray you.

MR. DE B. (*To Béline*). These tears are unseasonable. Matters have not come to that yet.

BEL. Ah! Sir, you do not know what a husband is whom one loves tenderly.

ARG. All the regret which I shall have, if I die, my dear, is not to have a child by you. Mr. Purgon had told me that I should have one.

MR. DE B. This may come yet.

ARG. I must make my will, love, in the manner this gentleman says; but as a precaution, I will put into your

hands the twenty thousand francs in gold which I have in the wainscoting of the recess of my bed, and two bills payable to the bearer, one from Mr. Damon, and the other from Mr. Gérante.

BEL. No, no, I will have nothing of all this. By the bye ! . . . how much say you is there in your recess ?

ARG. Two thousand francs, my love.

BEL. Do not speak to me of property, I pray you. By the bye ! . . . for how much are the two bills.

ARG. They are, my dear, one for four thousand francs, and the other for six.

BEL. All the riches in the world, my friend, are nothing compared with you.

MR. DE B. (*To Argan*). Shall we proceed to the making of the will ?

ARG. Yes, Sir ; but we shall be more at ease in my little study. Pray, my love, conduct me.

BEL. Come, my poor dear child.

SCENE X.—ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

TOI. They are with a notary and I heard them speaking about a will. Your step-mother does not go to sleep ; and it is no doubt some conspiracy against your interests to which she drives your father.

AN. Let him dispose of his property according as he likes, provided he does not dispose of my heart. You see, Toinette, the violent designs which they have upon it. Do not abandon me, I pray you, in the strait I am in.

TOI. I, abandon you ! I would rather die. Your step-mother may make me her confidante, and draw me in to her interests as much as she likes, I was never able to like her ; and have always been on your side. Let me manage ; I shall do everything to serve you ; but, to do so with more effect, I shall change my tactics, conceal the interest I take in you, and pretend to enter into the feelings of your father and step-mother.

AN. Try, I beseech you, to send Cléante word of the marriage that has been resolved upon.

TOI. I have no one that I can employ for this errand but the old usurer, Punch, my lover ; and it will cost me

some sweet words, which I do not begrudge for your sake.<sup>30</sup> To-day it is too late, but the first thing to-morrow I shall send for him, and he will be delighted to . . .

SCENE XI.—BÉLINE *in the house*, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

BEL. Toinette !

TOI. (*To Angélique*). I am being called. Good-night. Rely upon me.

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### FIRST INTERLUDE.

*The Scene changes and represent a town.*

*Punch, in the night, comes to serenade his mistress. He is first of all interrupted by the violins, with which he gets into a passion, and afterwards by the watch, composed of dancers and musicians.*

PUNCH. (*Alone*). O, love, love, love, love ! Poor Punch, what a deuce of a fancy has got into your brain ! What are you amusing yourself with, wretched idiot that you are ? You leave the care of your business, and let your affairs go anyhow ; you no longer eat, you do hardly drink, you lose your rest at night ; and all this, for whom ? For a dragon, a downright dragon ; a she-devil who repulses you, and mocks at all you say to her. But it is no good arguing on that point. You will it so, Cupid : one must be a fool, like many others. It is not the wisest thing for a man of my age ; but what can I do to it ? One cannot be wise when one will, and old brains get out of order as well as young ones. I have come to see if I cannot soften my tigress by a serenade. At times there is nothing so touching as a lover who comes to sing his complaints to the bolts and bars of his mistress's door. (*After having taken his lute*). Here is something to accompany my voice with. Oh night ! O dear night ! carry my love-sick complaints to the bed of my obdurate one.

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<sup>30</sup> Toinette mentions Punch only to introduce the following Interlude.

Night and day I love and adore you.  
I seek a yes that shall restore me;  
But if you answer, No,  
Fair ingrate, I shall die.

Hope deferred  
Makes the heart sick;  
And far from you  
It consumes its hours.  
This sweet error  
That does persuade me  
That my grief is about to end,  
Alas! lasts too long.  
Thus, through loving you too much, I languish  
and I die.

Night and day I love and adore you.  
I seek a yes that shall restore me;  
But if you answer, No,  
Fair ingrate, I shall die.

If you are not asleep,  
Think at least  
Of the wounds  
You give to my heart.  
Ah! pretend at least,  
For my consolation,  
If you will kill me,  
To be in the wrong;  
Your pity will assuage my martyrdom.

Night and day I love and adore you.  
I seek a yes that shall restore me;  
But if you answer, No,  
Fair ingrate, I shall die.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The original is in Italian.

SCENE II.—PUNCH, AN OLD WOMAN, SHOWING HERSELF  
AT THE WINDOW, AND ANSWERING PUNCH, MOCKING HIM.

OLD WOMAN. (*Sings.*)—

Gallants, who, at every moment, with deceitful looks,  
And lying wishes,  
And false sighs,  
And perfidious tones,  
Pride yourself on being faithful,  
Ah! do not deceive yourselves.  
From experience I know  
That neither constancy nor faithfulness  
Is to be found in you.

Ah! how foolish is she who believes you!

These languishing regards  
Do not inspire me with any love,  
These ardent sighs  
Do not inflame me,  
I swear to you on my faith.  
Unhappy gallant!  
My heart, insensible to your complaint,  
Will ever laugh at it:  
Believe me;  
For from experience I know  
That neither constancy nor faithfulness  
Is to be found in you.

Ah! how foolish is she who believes you!<sup>22</sup>

SCENE III.—PUNCH, VIOLINS BEHIND THE SCENES.

*The violins commence an air.*

PUNCH. What impertinent harmony comes to interrupt  
my song!

*The violins continue to play.*

PUNCH. Peace, there! be still, you violins. Let me  
bewail at my ease the cruelties of my inexorable fair one.

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. Keep still, I tell you: it is I who wish to sing.

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<sup>22</sup> The original is also in Italian.



*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. Silence then!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. Good gracious!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. Ah!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. Is this in fun?

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. Ah! what a noise!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. May the devil take you!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. I am bursting with rage!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. You will not be still then! Ah! Heaven be praised!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. What! again?

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. A plague upon these violins!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. What silly music this!

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. (*Singing, in imitation of the violins.*) La, la, la, la, la, la.

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. (*Same.*) La, la, la, la, la, la.

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. (*Same.*) La, la, la, la, la, la.

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. (*Same*). La, la, la, la, la, la.

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. (*Same*). La, la, la, la, la, la.

*The violins continue.*

PUNCH. Upon my word this amuses me. Go on, gentlemen violin-players; you are giving me great pleasure. (*No longer hearing anything*). But continue, I pray you.

*Scene IV. Punch, alone.*

This is the way to quiet them. Music is accustomed not to do what we wish. And now, it is my turn. I must prelude a bit, and play a little piece before singing, so as the better to catch my tone. (*He takes his lute, upon which he pretends to play, imitating with his lips and tongue the sound of that instrument*). Plan, plan, plan, plin, plin, plin. This is a nasty time to tune a lute to. Plin, plin, plin. Plin, tan, plan. Plin, plan. The strings do not hold in such weather. Plin, plin. I hear some noise. Let us put our lute against the door.

*Scene V.—Punch; Archers passing in the street, attracted by the noise which they hear.*

ARCH. (*Singing*). Who goes there! who goes there?

PUNCH. (*Softly*). What the devil is that? Is it the fashion to speak in music?

ARCH. Who goes there? who goes there? who goes there?

PUNCH. (*Frightened*). I, I, I.

ARCH. Who goes there? who goes there? I ask you.

PUNCH. I, I, I tell you.

ARCH. And who are you? who are you?

PUNCH. I, I, I, I, I, I.

ARCH. Tell your name, tell your name, without delaying longer.

PUNCH. (*Pretending to be courageous*). My name is, Go and get yourself hanged.

ARCH. Here, comrades, here.

And seize the insolent who answers us thus.

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

*The whole of the watch come, seeking for Punch in the dark.*

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. Who goes there?

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. Who are the scoundrels whom I hear?

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. Ugh!

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. Hullo! my servants! my lacqueys!

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. S'death!

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. S'blood!

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. I shall knock some of them down.

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. Here! Champagne, Poitevin, Picard, Basque, Breton.<sup>23</sup>

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. Just hand me my musket. . . .

*Violins and Dancers.*

PUNCH. (*Pretending to discharge a Pistol*). Paff.  
(*They all fall down, and run away afterwards*).

SCENE VI.—PUNCH (*Alone*).

Ah! ah! ah! ah! what a fright I have given them! They must be silly people to be afraid of me, who am afraid of others. Upon my word, there is nothing like being artful in this world. If I had not imitated the

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<sup>23</sup> See *Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I., page 162, note 40.

grand nobleman, and pretended to be brave, they would not have failed to lock me up. Ah! ah! ah! (*The Archers draw near, and having heard what he said, catch him by the collar*).

SCENE VII.—PUNCH; ARCHERS, *singing*.

ARCH. (*Seizing Punch*).

We have got him. Here, comrades, here!  
Make haste; bring a light.

(*The whole of the watch come with lanterns*).

SCENE VIII.—PUNCH; ARCHERS, *dancing and singing*.

ARCH. Ah! traitor; ah! rogue, it is you?

Wretch, cur, hangdog, impudent, audacious,  
Insolent, brazen-faced fellow, scoundrel, cut-  
purse thief,

You dare give us a fright!

PUNCH. Gentlemen, it is because I was drunk.

ARCH. No, no, no; no arguing:

We must teach you to behave.

To prison, quick, to prison.

PUNCH. Gentlemen, I am not a thief.

ARCH. To prison.

PUNCH. I am a citizen of the town.

ARCH. To prison.

PUNCH. What have I done?

ARCH. To prison, quick, to prison.

PUNCH. Let me go, gentlemen.

ARCH. No.

PUNCH. I beseech you!

ARCH. No.

PUNCH. Eh!

ARCH. No.

PUNCH. I beseech you.

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. Gentlemen.

ARCH. No, no, no.

PUNCH. If you please!

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. For charity!

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. In Heaven's name !

ARCH. No, no.

PUNCH. Have mercy.

ARCH. No, no, no arguing,  
We must teach you to behave.  
To prison, quick, to prison.

PUNCH. Eh ! gentlemen, is there nothing capable of softening your hearts ?

ARCH. It is easy to move us ;  
And we are more tender-hearted than you  
would believe.  
Only give us six pistoles to drink your health  
with,  
And we will let you go.

PUNCH. Alas ! gentlemen, I assure you that I have not a penny upon me.

ARCH. In default of six pistoles,  
Choose then without ado  
To receive thirty fillips,  
Or twelve blows with the stick.

PUNCH. If it must be, and that I must pass through that, I choose the fillips.

ARCH. Come then, prepare yourself,  
And count the fillips well.

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

*The dancing archers give him the fillips, keeping time with the music.*

PUNCH. (*Counting the fillips which they are giving him*).  
One and two, three and four, five and six, seven and eight, nine and ten, eleven and twelve, and thirteen, and fourteen, and fifteen.

ARCH. Ah ! ah ! you will pass through it !  
Let us begin once more.

PUNCH. Ah ! gentlemen, my poor head can stand this no longer, and you have just made it like a cooked apple. I prefer the blows with the stick to your beginning again.

ARCH. Be it so. Since the stick has more charms for you,  
You shall be satisfied.

*Third Entry of the Ballet.*

*The dancing archers give him blows with the stick, keeping time to the music.*

PUNCH. (*Counting the blows of the stick*). One, two, three, four, five, six. Ah! ah! ah! I can resist no longer. Here, gentlemen, here are six pistoles which I give you.

ARCH. Ah! what a gentleman! Ah! what a great and generous soul;

Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Gentlemen, I wish you good-night.

ARCH. Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Your servant.

ARCH. Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Your very humble servant.

ARCH. Good-bye, Sir; good-bye, Mr. Punch.

PUNCH. Until we meet again.

*Fourth Entry of the Ballet.*

*They all dance from joy, at the money they have received.*

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ACT II.

*The scene represents Argan's room.*

SCENE I.—CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Not recognising Cléante*). What is your pleasure, Sir?

CLE. What is your pleasure?

TOI. Ah! ah! it is you! What surprise! What come you to do here?

CLE. To learn my fate, to speak to the amiable Angélique, to consult the sentiments of her heart, and to ask her decision about this fatal match of which I have been informed.

TOI. Yes; but you cannot speak so inconsiderately to Angélique: it requires secrecy, and you have been told of the careful watch that is kept over her, that she is never allowed to go out, nor to speak to any one; and that it was only the curiosity of an old aunt, who ob-

tained permission for us to go to this comedy, which gave rise to your passion ; and we have taken good care not to speak of this adventure.

CLE. For this reason do I not come as Cléante, and in the guise of her lover ; but as a friend of her music-teacher, of whom I have obtained leave to say that he sends me in his stead.

TOI. Here comes her father. Just retire a little, and let me tell him that you are there.

SCENE II.—ARGAN, TOINETTE.

ARG. (*Believing himself alone, and not noticing Toinette*). Mr. Purgon has told me to walk about this morning, in my room, a dozen times up and a dozen times down, but I have forgotten to ask him whether it should be the length or the breadth of the room.

TOI. Sir, here is a . . .

ARG. Speak low, you hang-dog. You shake my brain, and you forget that invalids should not be spoken to so loudly.

TOI. I wished to say to you, Sir . . .

ARG. Speak low, I tell you.

TOI. Sir . . .

(*She pretends to speak.*)

ARG. Eh?

TOI. I was telling you that . . .

(*She again pretends to speak.*)

ARG. What do you say?

TOI. (*Loud*). I say that there is a man who wishes to speak to you.

ARG. Let him come here. (*Toinette beckons Cléante to draw near*).

SCENE III.—ARGAN, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

CLE. Sir . . .

TOI. (*To Cléante*). Do not speak so loud, for fear of shaking master's brain.

CLE. Sir, I am charmed to find you up, and to see that you are convalescent.

TOI. (*Pretending to be angry*). How ! convalescent ! That is false. Master is always ill.

CLE. I heard it said that Mr. Argan was getting better ; and I find that he looks well.

TOI. What do you mean by "he looks well?" Master looks very bad; and they are impertinent fellows who have told you that he was better. He has never been worse.

ARG. She is right.

TOI. He walks, sleeps, eats and drinks like other people; but that does not prevent him from being very ill.

ARG. That is true.

CLE. I am sorely grieved, Sir. I come from your daughter's singing-master; he has been obliged to go into the country for a few days, and, as his intimate friend, he sends me in his stead to continue the lessons, for fear that, in interrupting them, she should forget what she already knows.

ARG. Very good. (*To Toinette*). Call Angélique.

TOI. I think, Sir, that it would be better to take this gentleman to her room.

ARG. No. Fetch her here.

TOI. He could not give her a proper lesson, if they be not alone.

ARG. Yes, yes.

TOI. It will upset you, Sir; and there should be nothing to excite you, and to shake your brain, in the state you are in.

ARG. Not at all, not at all: I love music, and I shall be glad to . . . Ah! here she is. (*To Toinette*). Go you and see, you, whether my wife is dressed.

SCENE IV.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE.

ARG. Come here, daughter. Your music-master is gone to the country; and here is some one whom he sends in his stead to teach you.

AN. (*Recognizing Cléante*). Oh Heavens!

ARG. What is the matter? Whence this surprise?

AN. It is . . .

ARG. What? What moves you in this manner?

AN. It is a most surprising adventure that is happening here, father.

ARG. How?

AN. I dreamt last night that I was in the greatest difficulty, and that some one, just like this gentleman, pre-



sented himself to me, of whom I implored assistance, and who came to deliver me from the trouble in which I was ; and my surprise was great to see unexpectedly, on arriving here, what was in my mind all night.

CLE. It is being very fortunate to occupy your thoughts, whether sleeping or waking ; and my happiness would be great, no doubt, if you were in some danger, from which you deemed me worthy to extricate you. There is nothing I would not do to . . .

SCENE V.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*To Argan*). Upon my word, Sir, I am entirely on your side this time, and I retract everything which I said yesterday. Here are Mr. Diafoirus, the father, and Mr. Diafoirus, his son, who come to pay you a visit. What a nice son-in-law you will have ! You shall see the handsomest young fellow possible, and the wittiest. He has said but two words which have delighted me, and your daughter will be charmed with him.

ARG. (*To Cléante, who pretends to go*). Do not go, Sir. My daughter is about to be married, and her intended, whom she has not seen as yet, has just come.

CLE. It is doing me a great honour, Sir, to wish me to assist at so pleasant an interview.

ARG. He is the son of a very able physician ; and the marriage is to take place in four days.

CLE. Very good.

ARG. Just mention it to her music-master, so that he may be at the wedding.

CLE. I will not fail to do so.

ARG. I invite you also.

CLE. You are doing me much honour.

TOI. Come, let us place ourselves in position ; here they are.

SCENE VI.—MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE, A LACQUEY.

ARG. (*Putting his hand to his cap, without taking it off*). Mr. Purgon, Sir, has forbidden me to uncover my head. You belong to the profession : you know the consequences.

Mr. D. In all our visits we aim at bringing help to those who are ill, and not inconvenience.

(*Argan and Mr. Diafoirus speak at the same time.*).

ARG. I receive, Sir,

MR. D. We come here, Sir,

ARG. With great joy,

MR. D. My son Thomas, and I,

ARG. The honour which you do me,

MR. D. To assure you, Sir,

ARG. And I should have wished . . .

MR. D. How delighted we are . . .

ARG. To be able to go to you . . .

MR. D. At the graciousness you show us . . .

ARG. To assure you of it ;

MR. D. In receiving us . . .

ARG. But you know, Sir,

MR. D. To the honour, Sir,

ARG. What it is to be a poor invalid,

MR. D. Of your alliance ;

ARG. Who can do nothing else . . .

MR. D. And to assure you . . .

ARG. Than to tell you in this spot . . .

MR. D. That in all things pertaining to our profession,

ARG. That, he will seek every opportunity . . .

MR. D. As well as in everything else,

ARG. To tell you, Sir,

MR. D. We shall always be prepared, Sir.

ARG. That he is entirely at your service.

MR. D. To prove our zeal to you. (*To his son*). Come Thomas, approach and pay your respects.

THOM. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). Is it not with the father that I ought to begin ?<sup>24</sup>

MR. D. Yes.

THOM. (*To Argan*). Sir, I come to salute, to acknowledge, to cherish, and to revere in you a second father, but a second father to whom, I make bold to say, I find myself more indebted than to the first. The first engendered me ; but

<sup>24</sup> In the edition of Molière's works of 1682 is the following note : " Mr. Thomas Diafoirus is a great booby, having newly left the schools, and doing everything awkwardly and at the wrong time."

you have chosen me ; he received me through necessity, but you have accepted me out of kindness.<sup>26</sup> What I have from him is the work of his body ; but what I have from you is the work of your will ; and inasmuch as the spiritual faculties are above the corporal, so much the more do I owe you, and so much the more do I hold precious this future filiation, of which I come this day to render to you, before-hand, the very humble and very respectful homage.

TOI. Long life to the colleges which turn out so able a man !

THOM. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). Has this been right, father ?  
MR. D. Optime.

ARG. (*To Angélique*). Come, salute this gentleman.

THOM. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). Shall I kiss her ?<sup>27</sup>

MR. D. Yes, yes.

THOM. (*To Angélique*). Madam, it is with justice, that Heaven has conceded you the title of stepmother, since we . . .

ARG. (*To Thomas Diafoirus*). This is not my wife, it is my daughter to whom you are speaking.

THOM. Where is she then ?

ARG. She will be here directly.

THOM. Shall I wait, father, until she comes ?

MR. D. Offer your compliments to the young lady.

THOM. Miss, neither more nor less than the statue of Memnon gave forth an harmonious sound, when it was illuminated by the rays of the sun, so do I feel myself animated by a sweet transport of the appearance of the sun of your charms ;<sup>28</sup> and as naturalists observe that the flower named heliotrope turns incessantly towards that star of the day, so shall my heart henceforth turn towards the resplendent star of your adorable eyes, as to its only pole. Permit me then, Miss, to bring to-day to the altar of your charms the offer of that heart which aspires and

<sup>26</sup> This beginning seems imitated from a passage of a speech of Cicero — *Ad Quirites, post reditum*.

<sup>27</sup> In the Elzevir edition of this play we find here : " He first makes a bow, and then turns his face towards his father. Isabelle (Angélique) receives the kiss with great disdain, while turning her head towards Cato (Toinette)."

<sup>28</sup> The Abbé d'Aubignac, in a dissertation against Corneille, uses nearly the same simile.

aims at no other glory than to be, all its life, Miss, your very humble, very obedient, and very faithful servant and husband.

TOI. See what it is to study ! one learns to say beautiful things.

ARG. (*To Cltante*). Eh ! What say you to this ?

CLE. That this gentleman does wonders, and that, if he be as good a physician as he is an orator, it would be a pleasure to be counted among his patients.

TOI. Assuredly. It will be something admirable, if his cures are as good as the speeches which he makes.

ARG. Come, quick, my chair, and seats for everybody. (*Servants hand chairs*). Place yourself there, daughter. (*To Mr. Diafoirus*). You see, Sir, that everyone admires your son ; and I think you very fortunate in finding yourself possessed of such a boy.

MR. D. Sir, it is not because I am his father ; but I can say that I have reason to be satisfied with him, and that all who see him speak of him as a youth who has no harm in him. He never had a very lively imagination, nor that brilliant wit which is noticed in some ; but it is exactly on this account that I have argued well of his judgment, a quality requisite for the exercise of our art. He never was, when little, what they call sharp and wide-awake ; he was always seen to be gentle, peaceable and taciturn, never saying a word and never playing at those little games which are called infantine. They had all the difficulty in the world in teaching him to read, and at nine years of age, he did not yet know his letters. Good, said I to myself, the backward trees are those that bear the best fruit. One cuts into marble with far more difficulty than into sand ; but things are preserved much longer there ; and that slowness of apprehension, that dulness of imagination, is the sign of a future good judgment. When I sent him to college, he found it very hard, but he bore up against the difficulties ; and his tutors always praised him to me for his assiduity and his application. In short, by dint of hammering, he has gloriously obtained his diplomas ; and I may say, without vanity, that in the two years after he took his degree, there is no candidate who has made more noise than he in all the disputes of our school.

He has rendered himself formidable; and there is no act propounded upon which he does not argue as long as he can for the contrary proposition. He is firm in a dispute, strenuous as a Turk in his principles, and pursues an argument into the farthest recesses of logic. But, that which above all pleases me in him, and in which he follows my example, is that he attaches himself blindly to the opinions of the ancients, and that he never would understand or listen to the reasonings and experiments of the pretended discoveries of our age in reference to the circulation of the blood, and other opinions of the same kind.<sup>28</sup>

THOM. (*Drawing from his pocket a large thesis rolled up, which he presents to Angélique*). I have defended a thesis against the circulators, which, with the permission of your father (*Bowing to Argan*), I make bold to offer to this young lady, as a homage which I owe to her of the first fruits of my mind.

AN. It is a useless piece of furniture to me, Sir, and I am no judge in these matters.

TOI. (*Taking the thesis*). Give it all the same; it is worth taking for the picture; it will do to decorate our room.

THOM. (*Again bowing to Argan*). Once more, with the permission of your father, I invite you to come and see, one of these days, for your amusement, the dissection of a woman, upon which I am to lecture.

TOI. The entertainment will be pleasant. There are some people who treat their mistresses to a comedy; but to provide a dissection is more gallant.

MR. D. For the rest, as regards the requisite qualities for wedlock and propagation, I assure you that, according to the rules of our physicians, he is such as could be wished for; that he possesses in a praiseworthy degree the prolific virtue, and that he is of the proper temperament to engender and procreate well-conditioned children.

ARG. Is it not your intention, Sir, to push him at

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<sup>28</sup> Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood in 1619, and many discussions took place in France on that subject, which were not completely ended when Molière's last play was performed. This same year (1673) Louis XIV. instituted at the *Jardin des Plantes* a special chair for anatomy.

Court, and to procure for him the place of a physician in ordinary?

MR. D. To speak frankly to you, our profession when near the great has never appeared pleasant to me; and I have always found that it does better for us to remain with the public. The public is easy to deal with; you are responsible for your actions to no one; and provided you follow the current of the rules of your art, you need not be uneasy about what may happen. But what is vexatious with the great, is that, when they fall ill, they absolutely wish their physicians to cure them.

TOR. That is funny! and they are very impertinent to wish you gentlemen to cure them! You are not near them for that; you are there only to receive your fees, and to order them remedies; it is for them to get better, if they can.

MR. D. That is true; one is only obliged to treat people according to the rules.

ARG. (*To Cléante*). Just make my daughter sing a little before the company, Sir.

CLÉ. I was awaiting your orders, Sir; and an idea has just struck me, to entertain the company, to sing with the lady a scene from an operetta which has lately been composed. (*To Angélique, giving her a paper*). There, this is your part.

AN. I?

CLÉ. (*Softly to Angélique*). Do not make any objection to it, pray, and let me make you understand what the scene is which we are to sing. (*Aloud*). I have no voice for singing; but in this case it is sufficient that I can make myself heard; and you will have the kindness to excuse me, by the necessity under which I find myself to make the young lady sing.<sup>20</sup>

ARG. Is the poetry good?

CLÉ. It is properly called a little improvised opera; and you will only hear sung rhythmical prose, or some sort of blank verse, such as affection and necessity might suggest

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<sup>20</sup> A similar scene is also to be found in *The Blunderer* (see Vol. I.), *The School for Husbands* (see Vol. I.), *Love is the Physician* (see Vol. II.), *The Sicilian* (see Vol. II.), and *The Miser* (see Vol. III.)

to two persons, who say those things out of their own heads, and speak on the spur of the moment.

ARG. Very good. Let us listen.

CLE. This is the plot of the scene : A shepherd was attentively watching the beauties of a spectacle which had just commenced, when his attention was disturbed by a noise which he heard at his side. He turns round, and sees a coarse fellow, who with insolent words insults a shepherdess. Immediately he espouses the interests of that sex to which all men owe homage ; and after having given the coarse fellow the punishment due to his insolence, he comes back to the shepherdess, and beholds a young person, who, from the most lovely eyes which he had ever seen, drops tears which he thinks the most beautiful in the world. Alas ! says he to himself, can people be capable of insulting so amiable a being ! and what inhuman monster, what barbarian would not be touched by such tears ? He busies himself to stop them, these tears which he thinks so beautiful ; and the gentle shepherdess takes care at the same time to thank him for his slight service, but in a manner so charming, so tender and so impassioned, that the shepherd cannot resist it ; and every glance, is a dart full of fire with which his heart feels itself pierced. Is there ought, said he, that could deserve the sweet words of such an acknowledgment ? And what would we not do, to what services, to what dangers would we not feel delighted to run, to attract to ourselves, but for one moment, the moving tenderness of so grateful a heart ! The whole of the spectacle is enacted without his paying the least attention to it ; but he complains that it is too short, for the end will separate him from his adorable shepherdess ; and from this first sight, from this first moment, he brings back with him all that can be most intense in a passion of several years' duration. Behold him immediately experiencing all the ills of absence, and he is tortured by seeing no longer her whom he has seen such a short time. He does all he can to enjoy this sight once more, of which he preserves night and day so precious a recollection ; but the great restraint under which his shepherdess is kept deprives him of every opportunity. The violence of his passion makes him resolve to ask for

the hand of the adorable fair one, without whom he can no longer live ; and he obtains her permission by means of a note which he has the skill to have conveyed to her. But, at the same time, he is informed that the father of his fair one has projected a marriage with some one else, and that everything is being prepared to celebrate the ceremony.<sup>80</sup> Judge how cruel is the blow to the heart of this sad shepherd ! Behold him overwhelmed by a mortal grief ; he cannot bear the horrible thought of seeing all he loves in the arms of another ; and in despair, his love makes him find the means of introducing himself into the house of his shepherdess to learn her feelings, and to know from her the fate to which he is to submit. He there meets with the preparations for all that he fears ; he witnesses the coming of the unworthy rival whom the whims of a father oppose to the tenderness of his love ; he sees him triumphant, this ridiculous rival, near the gentle shepherdess, as if the conquest were sure ; and this sight fills him with anger which he can scarcely master ; he darts painful glances at her whom he adores ; and the respect for her, and the presence of her father, prevent his saying anything to her except by his looks ; but at last he breaks through all restraint, and the transport of his passion obliges him thus to speak—(*He sings*)

Beauteous Philis, it is too much, it is too  
much to suffer ;

Let us break this cruel silence, and bare your  
thoughts to me.

Tell me my fate.

Am I to live ? am I to die ?

AN. (*Singing*). You behold me, Tircis, sad and melan-  
choly,

At the preparations for the marriage which alarms  
you.

To Heaven I lift my eyes, I look at you, I sigh ;  
Need I to tell you more ?

---

<sup>80</sup> Molière has borrowed this tale of Cléante most probably from the Spanish of Francisco de Roxas, which had already been used by Thomas Corneille, in *Don Bertrand de Cigarral*, a comedy, performed in 1650.



ARG. Lack-a-day! I did not think that my daughter was so clever as to sing thus at first sight, without hesitating.

CLE. Alas! fair Philis,  
Can it be that the enamoured Tircis  
Could be happy enough  
To find a place in your heart?

AN. I do not refuse to acknowledge it, in this exceeding grief;

Yes, Tircis, I love you.

CLE. O word full of charms!  
Have I heard rightly? Alas!

Say it once more, Philis, so that I may not doubt.

AN. Yes, Tircis, I love you.

CLE. For mercy's sake, once more, Philis.

AN. I love you.

CLE. Repeat it a hundred times; do not get weary.

AN. I love you, I love you;

Yes, Tircis, I love you.

CLE. Ye gods, ye kings, who look down upon the world  
beneath your feet,

Can you compare your happiness with mine?

But, Philis, one thought

Comes to trouble this sweet bliss.

A rival, a rival . . .

AN. Ah! I hate him more than death;  
And his presence is to me, as it is to you,  
A cruel torture.

CLE. But a father wishes to compel you to obey his wishes.

AN. Sooner, sooner will I die

Than ever consent to it;

Sooner, sooner will I die, sooner will I die.<sup>21</sup>

ARG. And what says the father to all this?

CLE. He says nothing.

ARG. That is an idiot of a father, to suffer all this nonsense without saying anything.

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<sup>21</sup> La Grange and the wife of Molière had a great success in this scene, as it is said in the Sixth of the *Entretiens Galants, about Music*, published in Paris in 1681.

CLE. (*Wishing to continue to sing*).

Ah! my love . . .

ARG. No, no; this is enough of it. This comedy sets a very bad example. The shepherd Tircis is an impertinent fellow, and the shepherdess Philis is an impudent hussy to speak in that way before her father. (*To Angélique*). Show me this paper. Ah! ah! but where are the words which you have spoken? There is nothing but music written there?

CLE. Do not you know, Sir, that it has been recently invented to write the words with the notes in one? <sup>22</sup>

ARG. Very good. I am your servant, Sir; good-bye. We could have very well dispensed with your impertinent opera.

CLE. I thought to amuse you.

ARG. Nonsense does not amuse. Ah! here comes my wife.

✓ SCENE VII.—BÉLINE, ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE.

ARG. My love, this is the son of Mr. Diafoirus.

THOM. Madam, it is with justice that Heaven has granted you the title of stepmother, for we see in your face . . . <sup>23</sup>

BEL. Sir, I am delighted to have come here opportunely, to enjoy the honour of seeing you.

THOM. For we see in your face . . . for we see in your face . . . Madam, you have interrupted me in the midst of my period, and that has confused my memory.

MR. D. Thomas, reserve this for another opportunity.

ARG. My pet, I would have wished you to be here just now.

TOI. Ah! Madam, you have lost a great deal in not having been here at the second father, at the statue of Memnon, and at the flower called heliotrope.

ARG. Come, daughter, put your hand in this gentleman's, and pledge him your faith, as to your husband.

<sup>22</sup> In the Elzevir edition of the play, Cléante pretends that the words of the duet are old and well known.

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Diafoirus utters a compliment which he has studied, but cannot finish it. *Belle-mère* means stepmother, but *belle mère* handsome mother.

AN. Father. . .

ARG. Well! father! What does this mean.

AN. Pray, do not hurry matters. Give us at least time to know each other, and to see grow up in us that inclination for one another which is so necessary to form a perfect union.

THOM. As for me, Miss, it is already entirely grown up in me; and I have no need to wait any longer.

AN. If you are so prompt, Sir, it is not the same with me; and I confess to you that your merit has not as yet made any impression on my heart.

ARG. Oh! well, well; there will be ample leisure for that when you are married.

AN. Ah! father, give me some time, I pray you. Wedlock is a chain to which we should never subject a heart by force; and if this gentleman is a man of honour, he ought not to wish to accept a person who would be his by coercion.

THOM. *Nego consequentiam*, Miss; and I may be a man of honour, and still wish to accept you from the hands of your father.

AN. It is a bad means of making yourself beloved by any one by doing her violence.

THOM. We read of the ancients, Miss, that their custom was to carry away by force, from the homes of their fathers, the daughters who were led to marriage, so that it might not appear to be by their own consent that they flew into the arms of a man.

AN. The ancients, Sir, are the ancients; and we are the people of the present day. Pretences are not at all necessary in our age; and when a marriage pleases us, we know well enough how to go to it, without being dragged to it. Have patience; if you love me, Sir, you ought to wish everything that I wish.

THOM. Yes, Miss, up to the interests of my love, exclusively.

AN. But the great sign of love is to submit to the wishes of her whom we love.

THOM. *Distinguo*, Miss. In what concerns not her possession, *concedo*; but in what concerns it, *nego*.

TOI. You may argue as much as you please. The

gentleman is fresh from college, and he will always give you your answer. Why resist so much, and refuse the glory of being attached to the body of the faculty?

BEL. Perhaps she has some other inclination in her mind.

AN. If I had, Madam, it would be such as reason and honour would allow.

ARG. Good gracious ! I am acting a pretty part here.

BEL. If I were you, child, I should not force her to marry ; and I know well enough what I should do.

AN. I am aware, Madam, of what you mean, and of the kind feelings which you have towards me ; but your designs may not perhaps be so happy as to be executed.

BEL. It is because very circumspect and very respectable girls like you, do not care to be obedient and submissive to the wishes of their fathers. That was very well in times gone by.

AN. The duty of a daughter has its limits, Madam ; and neither reason nor the laws extend it to other matters.

BEL. This means that your ideas are not averse to marriage ; but that you wish to choose a husband according to your own fancy.

AN. If my father will not give me a husband whom I like, I shall beseech him, at least, not to force me to marry one whom I cannot love.

ARG. Gentlemen, I ask your pardon for all this.

AN. Every one has his own motive for marrying. As for me, who wish no husband but to truly love him, and who intend to make it a life-long attachment, I confess to you that I am somewhat cautious about it. There are some who take husbands only to emancipate themselves from the restraint of their parents, and to place themselves in a position to do as they like. There are others, Madam, who make marriage a commerce of sheer interest, who only wed in order to obtain jointures, to enrich themselves by the death of those whom they espouse, and run without scruple from husband to husband, to appropriate to themselves their spoils. These persons, in truth do not stand upon so many ceremonies, and have little regard to the persons themselves.

BEL. I find you in a great mood for arguing to-day, and I should like to know what you mean by this.

AN. I, Madam? What should I mean but what I say?

BEL. You are so silly, my dear, that there is no enduring you any longer.

AN. You would like to provoke me, Madam, into answering you by some impertinence; but I warn you that you shall not have the advantage.

BEL. Your insolence is matchless.

AN. No, Madam, you may say your best.

BEL. And you have a ridiculous pride, an impertinent presumption, which causes every one to shrug their shoulders.

AN. All this will be of no avail, Madam. I shall be prudent in spite of you; and to take away all hope of your succeeding in what you wish, I shall retire from your presence.

SCENE VIII.—ARGAN, BÉLINE, MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE.

ARG. (*To Angelique, who is going*). Hark ye. There is no middle way in this case: make up your mind to marry this gentleman in four days, or a convent. (*To Béline*). Do not trouble yourself: I shall manage her properly.

BEL. I am sorry to leave you, child; but I have some business in town which I cannot delay. I shall soon be back again.

ARG. Go, my love, and call in at your notary, that he may attend to what you know.

BEL. Farewell, my little dear.

ARG. Good bye, darling.

SCENE IX.—ARGAN, MR. DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE.

ARG. There is a woman who loves me . . . it is not to be believed.

X MR. D. We are going to take leave of you, Sir.

ARG. Pray, Sir, just tell me in what condition I am.

MR. D. (*Feeling the pulse of Argan*). Come, Thomas, take hold of the other arm of this gentleman, to see

whether you can form a good judgment of his pulse.  
*Quid dicis?*

THOM. *Dico*, that this gentleman's pulse is the pulse of a man who is not in good health.

MR. D. Good,

THOM. That it is hardish not to say hard.

DR. D. Very well.

THOM. That it acts by fits and starts.

MR. D. *Bene*

THOM. And even a little irregular.

MR. D. *Optime*.

THOM. Which is a sign of intemperature in the *splenic parenchyma*, which means the milt.

MR. D. Very good.

ARG. No; Mr. Purgon says that it is my liver which is not right.

MR. D. Well, yes: whosoever says *parenchyma*, says the one and the other, on account of the close sympathy there is between them through the *vas breve*, the *pylorus*, and often through the *meatus cholidici*. He no doubt orders you to eat much roast meat.

ARG. No; nothing but boiled.

MR. D. Well, yes: roast, boiled, the same thing. He prescribes very carefully for you, and you cannot be in better hands.

ARG. Sir, how many grains of salt ought there to be put in an egg?

MR. D. Six, eight, ten, in even numbers, just as in medicine in odd numbers.

ARG. Until we meet again, Sir.

#### SCENE X.—BÉLINE, ARGAN.

BEL. I have come, child, before going out, to inform you of something to which you ought to look. In passing by Angélique's room, I noticed a young man with her, who ran away the moment he saw me.

ARG. A young man with my daughter!

BEL. Yes. Your little daughter Louison was with them, who can tell you particulars about it.

ARG. Send her here, my love, send her here. Ah! the

bold hussy. (*Alone*). I am no longer astonished at her resistance.

## SCENE XI.—ARGAN, LOUISON.

LOU. What do you wish with me, papa? My step-mother has told me that you want me.

ARG. Yes. Come here. Come closer. Turn round. Turn up your eyes. Look at me. Eh?

LOU. What, papa?

ARG. So?

LOU. What?

ARG. Have you nothing to tell me?

LOU. I will tell you, if you like, to amuse you, the story of *The Donkey's Skin*, or the fable of *The Raven and the Fox*, which I have been taught lately.<sup>25</sup>

ARG. That is not what I ask you.

LOU. What then?

ARG. Ah! you sly girl, you know very well what I mean!

LOU. I beg your pardon, papa.

ARG. Is it thus that you obey me?

LOU. What?

ARG. Did I not recommend you to come and tell me directly all that you see?

LOU. Yes, papa.

ARG. Have you done so?

LOU. Yes, papa. I have come and told you everything I saw.

ARG. And have you seen nothing to-day?

LOU. No, papa.

ARG. No?

LOU. No, papa.

ARG. You are sure?

LOU. I am sure.

ARG. Oh! very well; I shall let you see something.

LOU. (*Noticing some switches which Argan has taken up*). Oh! papa.

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<sup>25</sup> Perrault published the story of *Peru d'Ane* (the Donkey's Skin), in 1694, and as *The Imaginary Invalid* was performed in 1673, it is a proof that it was well known long before it was published.

ARG. Ah! Ah! you little deceiver, you do not tell me that you have seen a man in your sister's room!

LOU. (*Crying*). Papa!

ARG. (*Taking Louison by the arm*). This will teach you to tell lies.

LOU. (*Throwing herself at his knees.*) Ah! papa, I ask your pardon. It is because my sister told me not to tell you; but I am going to tell you all.

ARG. First of all you must be whipped for having told a lie. Afterwards we shall see about the rest.

LOU. Pardon, papa.

ARG. No, no.

LOU. Dear papa, do not whip me.

ARG. You shall be whipped.

LOU. In Heaven's name, papa, do not whip me!

ARG. (*Wanting to whip her*). You shall, you shall.

LOU. Ah! papa, you have hurt me. Wait: I am dead. (*She pretends to be dead.*)

ARG. Hullo! What is this? Louison, Louison! Ah! great Heaven! Louison! Ah! my daughter. Ah! unhappy being that I am! my dear daughter is dead! What have I done, wretch that I am! Ah! these cursed switches! The plague take the switches! Ah! my poor daughter, my poor little Louison!

LOU. There, there, papa do not cry so: I am not entirely dead.

ARG. Do you see the artful little girl! Well, I forgive you this time, provided you really tell me everything.

LOU. Oh! yes, papa.

ARG. You had better be careful in any case; for this little finger knows everything, and will tell me if you tell lies.

LOU. But, papa, do not tell sister that I have told you.

ARG. No, no.

LOU. (*After having made sure that no one is listening*). A man came into sister's room while I was there.

ARG. Well?

LOU. I asked him what he wanted, and he told me that he was her singing-master.

ARG. (*Aside*). Hem, hem! that is it. (*To Louison*). Well?



LOU. Sister came in afterwards.

ARG. Well?

LOU. She said to him: begone, begone, begone. Great Heavens, begone; you will drive me desperate.

ARG. Well?

LOU. And he, he would not go.

ARG. What did he say to her?

LOU. He said to her I do not know how many things.

ARG. And what more?

LOU. He said this, that, and the other, that he loved her dearly, and that she was the prettiest girl in the world.

ARG. And after that?

LOU. And after that, he fell down on his knees before her.

ARG. And after that?

LOU. And after that, he kissed her hands.

ARG. And after that?

LOU. And after that, stepmother came to the door, and he ran away.

ARG. There is nothing else?

LOU. No, papa.

ARG. My little finger, however, mutters something. (*Placing his finger to his ear*). Wait. Eh! ah! ah! Yes? oh! oh! Here is my little finger, which tells me of something that you have seen, but which you have not told me.

LOU. Ah! papa, your little finger is a story-teller.

ARG. Take care.

LOU. No, papa; do not believe it: it tells a story, I assure you.

ARG. Oh! very well, very well, we shall see. Go now, and take notice of everything: go. (*Alone*). Ah! there are no longer any children! Ah! what perplexity! I have not even so much leisure as to think about my illness. Really, I can hold out no longer. (*He drops into a chair*).

SCENE XII.—BÉRALDE, ARGAN.

BER. Well, brother! what is the matter? How do you do?

AR. Ah! brother, very poorly.

BER. How ! very poorly ?

AR. Yes ! I am in so weak a state, that it is incredible.

BER. That is sad.

AR. I have not even the strength to be able to speak.

BER. I came hither, brother, to propose to you a match for my niece Angélique.

AR. (*Speaking excitedly, and rising from his chair*).

Brother, do not speak to me about this hussy. She is a wretch, an impertinent, impudent girl, whom I shall place in a convent before two days are over.

BER. Ah ! that is right ! I am very glad that your strength is coming back a little, and that my visit is doing you good. Well, we will talk of business by-and-by. I have brought you an entertainment with which I fell in, which will dissipate your chagrin, and make you better disposed for what we are to talk about. They are Gipsies dressed as Moors, who perform dances intermixed with songs, with which I am sure you will be pleased ; and this will be as good for you as a prescription of Mr. Purgon. Come.

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### SECOND INTERLUDE.

*The brother of the Imaginary Invalid brings, to amuse him, several Gipsies of both sexes, dressed as Moors, who perform some dances intermixed with music.*

#### 1ST MOORISH WOMAN—

Sweet youth,  
Take advantage of the spring  
Of your best years ;  
Take advantage of the spring  
Of your best years ;  
Abandon yourself to the tender passion.

Without the amorous flame,  
The most charming pleasures  
Have not sufficient powerful attractions  
To satisfy the heart.

Sweet youth,  
Take advantage of the spring  
Of your best years ;  
Abandon yourself to the tender passion.

Do not lose these precious moments,  
Beauty vanishes,  
Time effaces it ;  
The age of coldness  
Comes in its stead,  
Which takes away our taste for these sweet  
pastimes.

Take advantage of the spring  
Of your best years,  
Sweet youth ;  
Take advantage of the spring  
Of your best years ;  
Abandon yourself to the tender passion.

*First Entry of the Ballet.*

Dance of the Gipsies.

2D MOORISH WOMAN—

What are you thinking of,  
When you press us to love ?  
Towards the tender passion  
Our hearts, in our youth,  
Have but too great an inclination.  
Love has, to catch us,  
Such sweet attractions,  
That, from our own will, without waiting,  
We would give ourselves up  
To its first solicitations ;  
But all that we hear  
Of the poignant griefs  
And the tears which it costs us,  
Makes us fear  
All its sweetness.

3D MOORISH WOMAN—

It is sweet, at our age,  
To love tenderly  
A lover  
Who is faithful:  
But, if he be fickle,  
Alas! what torture!

4TH MOORISH WOMAN—

It is not the unhappiness  
At the lover who breaks his vows;  
The pain  
And the rage  
Is that the fickle one  
Keeps possession of our heart.

2D MOORISH WOMAN—

What part are we to take,  
To defend our young hearts?

3D MOORISH WOMAN—

Must we deny ourselves to it,  
And flee from its delights.

4TH MOORISH WOMAN—

Are we to surrender them,  
Notwithstanding their rigours?

TOGETHER—

Yes, let us abandon ourselves to its ardours,  
Its transports, its whims,  
Its sweet languors,  
If it have some tortures,  
It has a thousand delights  
That charm the heart.

*Second Entry of the Ballet.*

*All the Moors dance together, and make the apes, which  
they have brought with them perform some jumping.*

## ACT III.

## SCENE I.—BÉRALDE, ARGAN, TOINETTE.

BER. Well! brother, what say you of this? Is it not better than a dose of cassia?

TOI. Humph! good cassia is good.

BER. Well! shall we talk a little together?

ARG. A little patience, brother: I shall be back directly.

TOI. Stay, Sir, you forget that you cannot walk without a stick.

ARG. You are right.

## SCENE II.—BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

TOI. Do not lose sight, if you please, of the interests of your niece.

BER. I shall try everything to obtain for her what she wishes.

TOI. We must absolutely prevent this extravagant match which he has taken into his head; and I have thought to myself that it would be a good thing to introduce into the place a doctor of our own choosing,<sup>86</sup> to disgust him with his Mr. Purgon, and to cry down his treatment of him. But as we have no one at hand to do this, I have made up my mind to play a trick of my own.

BER. How?

TOI. It is a whimsical idea. It may perhaps turn out more lucky than prudent. Let me manage. Act you on your side. There comes our man.

## SCENE III.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

BER. You will allow me, brother, to ask you, before all things, not to excite yourself in our conversation.

ARG. Agreed.

BER. To reply without bitterness, to the things I may say to you.

ARG. Yes.

BER. And to argue together the matters which we have to discuss, with a mind free from all passion.

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<sup>86</sup> In the original *un médecin à notre poste*.

ARG. Good Heavens! yes. What a deal of preamble.

BER. Whence comes it, brother, that having the property which you possess, and having no children but one daughter, for I do not reckon the little one; whence comes it, I say, that you talk of placing her in a convent?

ARG. Whence comes it brother, that I am master in my family, to do as I think best?

BER. Your wife does not fail to advise you to get rid, in that way, of your two daughters, and I have no doubt that, through a spirit of charity, she would be delighted to see them both good nuns.

ARG. There now! there we are. There is the poor woman at once brought up. It is she who does all the harm, and every one has a grudge against her.

BER. No, brother; let us leave her out of the question. She is a woman who has the best possible intentions towards your family, and who is devoid of all self-interest; who has a wonderful tenderness toward you, and who shows an inconceivable affection and kindness for your children: that is certain. Let us not speak of that, and let us go back to your daughter. What is the idea, brother, of wishing to make her marry the son of a doctor?

ARG. The idea is, of giving myself such a son-in-law as I want, brother.

BER. This is not your daughter's case, brother; and a more suitable match offers itself for her.

ARG. Yes; but this one, brother is more suitable to me.

BER. But must the husband she is to take, brother, be for her, or for you?

ARG. He must be both for her and for me, brother; and I wish to get into my family the people of whom I may be in need.

BER. For this reason, if your little girl were grown up, you would marry her to an apothecary.

ARG. Why not?

BER. Is it possible that you can always be wrapt up in your apothecaries and your doctors, and that you wish to be ill in spite of mankind and of nature?

ARG. How do you make that out, brother?

BER. I make it out, brother, that I see no man who is less ill than you, and that I wish for no better constitution

than your own. A great proof that you are in good health, and that you have a perfectly sound body is, that with all the pains you have taken, you have not been able to succeed as yet in spoiling the goodness of your constitution, and that you are not dead yet with all the physic which they have made you take.

ARG. But do you know, brother, that it is this which preserves me; and that Mr. Purgon says that I should succumb, if he were only three days without taking care of me?

BER. If you do not look to it, he will take so much care of you, that he shall send you into the next world.

ARG. But let us reason a little, brother. You do not believe then in physic?

BER. No, brother, and I do not see that it is necessary to salvation to believe in it.

ARG. What! you do not hold true a matter established throughout the world, and which all ages have revered.

BER. Far from holding it true, I consider it, between ourselves, one of the greatest follies of mankind; and to look philosophically at things, I do not see a more amusing mummery; I do not see anything more ridiculous than for one man to undertake to cure another.

ARG. Why cannot you admit, brother, that one man may be able to cure another?

BER. For this reason, brother, that the springs of our machine are a mystery, of which, up to the present, men can see nothing; and that nature has placed too thick a veil before our eyes for our knowing anything about it.

ARG. Then, in your opinion, doctors know nothing?

BER. True, brother, most of them have a deal of classical learning, know how to speak in good Latin, can name all the diseases in Greek, define and classify them; but as regards curing them, that is what they do not know at all.<sup>57</sup>

ARG. But, nevertheless, you must agree that, on this head, doctors know more than other people.

BER. They know, brother, what I have told you, which

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<sup>57</sup> Béralde's attack on the physicians should be compared with the thirty-seventh chapter of the Second Book of the *Essays* of Montaigne.

does not cure much; and the whole excellence of their art consists in a pompous gibberish, in a specious verbiage, which gives you words instead of reasons, and promises instead of effects.

ARG. But after all, brother, there are people as learned and as clever as you; and we find that, in case of illness, everyone has recourse to doctors.

BER. It is a sign of human weakness, and not of the truth of their art.

ARG. But doctors must believe in the truth of their art, inasmuch as they make use of it for themselves.

BER. That is because there are some among them who themselves share in the popular error by which they profit; and others who profit by it without sharing in it. Your Mr. Purgon, for instance, does not discriminate very clearly; he is a thorough physician from head to foot; a man who believes in his rules more than in all mathematical demonstrations, and who would think it a crime to wish to examine them; who sees nothing obscure in physic, nothing dubious, nothing difficult, and who, with an impetuosity of prejudice, a stiff-necked assurance, a coarse common sense and reasoning, rushes into purging and bleeding, and hesitates at nothing. You must not owe him a grudge for all he might do to you: he would despatch you with the most implicit faith; and he would, in killing you, only do what he has done to his wife and children, and what, if there were any need, he would do to himself.

ARG. That is because you bear him a grudge from infancy, brother.<sup>28</sup> But to cut it short, let us come to the fact. What must we do, then, when we are ill?

BER. Nothing, brother.

ARG. Nothing?

BER. Nothing. We must remain quiet. If we leave nature alone, she recovers gently from the disorder into which she has fallen. It is our anxiety, our impatience, which spoils all; and nearly all men die of their remedies, not of their diseases.

ARG. But you must admit, brother, that this nature may be assisted by certain things.

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<sup>28</sup> The original has *vous avez, mon frère, une dent de lait contre lui; dent de lait* means literally, a first or shedding tooth.



BER. Good Heavens ! brother, these are mere ideas with which we love to beguile ourselves ; and, at all times, beautiful fictions have crept in amongst men, in which we believe, because they flatter us, and because it were to be wished that they were true. When a physician speaks to you of aiding, assisting, and supporting nature, to take away from her what is hurtful, and to give her that which she wants, to re-establish her, and to put her in the full possession of her functions ; when he speaks to you of rectifying the blood, of regulating the bowels and the brain, of relieving the spleen, of putting the chest to rights, of mending the liver, of strengthening the heart, of renewing and preserving the natural heat, and of being possessed of secrets to prolong life till an advanced age, he just tells you the romance of physic. But when you come to the truth and experience, you find nothing of all this ; and it is like those beautiful dreams, which, on awaking, leave you nothing but the regret of having believed in them.

ARG. Which means that all the knowledge of the world is contained in your head, and that you profess to know more about it than all the great physicians of our age.

BER. In speaking and in reality, your great physicians are two different sorts of persons. Hear them hold forth, they are the cleverest people in the world ; see them act, they are the most ignorant of all men.

ARG. Lack-a-day ! you are a great doctor ; and I should much like to have one of these gentlemen here, to refute your arguments, and to take you down a peg or two.

BER. I, brother, I do not assume the task of combating the Faculty ; and every one, at his own risk and cost, may believe whatever he pleases. What I say about it is simply between ourselves, and I should have wished to be somewhat able to dispel the error in which you are, and to take you, for your amusement, to see one of the comedies of Molière upon this subject.

ARG. Your Molière, with his comedies, is a fine impertinent fellow ! and I think it is like his impudence to go and bring upon the stage such worthy persons as the physicians.

BER. He does not make fun of physicians, but of the ridiculousness of physic.

ARG. It is like him to do so, to interfere about controlling the Faculty ! There is a fine booby, a brazen impertinent fellow, to make fun of consultations and prescriptions, to attack the body of physicians, and to put on his stage such venerable persons as these gentlemen !

BER. What would you have him put there but the various professions of men ? They put princes and kings there every day, who are of quite as good family as physicians.

ARG. Now, by all that is terrible !<sup>20</sup> if I were the physicians, I would avenge myself of his impertinence ; and would let him die without assistance, whenever he felt ill. He might say and do what he liked ; I would not prescribe even the least bleeding, or the smallest enema ; and I would say to him : die, die ; that will teach you another time to make fun of the Faculty.

BER. You are very angry with him ?

ARG. Yes. He is a foolish fellow ; and if the physicians be wise, they will do what I say.

BER. He will be wiser still than your physicians, for he will not ask them for their assistance.

ARG. So much the worse for him, if he have no recourse to remedies.

BER. He has his reasons for not wishing for them, and he maintains that it is permitted only to robust and vigorous people, who have sufficient strength left to bear the remedies with the disease ; but that, as for him, he has just strength enough to bear his illness.

ARG. Silly reasons these ! There, brother, let us talk no more about this man ; for he excites my bile, and you will bring on my illness again.

BER. Very well, brother ; and to change our conversation, I will tell you, that on account of a trifling repugnance on the part of your daughter, you should not take the violent resolution to place her in a convent : that in the choice of a son-in-law, you should not blindly yield to a passion which carries you away ; and that, in such a matter, you should accommodate yourself somewhat to

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<sup>20</sup> The original has *Par la mort non de diable*, used for *Par la mort de Dieu, non, de diable* !

the inclination of your child, seeing that it is for her life, and that on it depends the happiness of a union.

SCENE IV.—MR. FLEURANT, *carrying a syringe*; ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Ah! by your leave, brother.

BER. What are you going to do?

ARG. Take this little enema: it will soon be done.

BER. You are jesting. Cannot you be a moment without an enema or some physic? Put it off till another time, and remain quiet a little.

ARG. It will be for to-night or for to-morrow morning, Mr. Fleurant.

MR. F. (*To Béralde*). With what do you meddle, to oppose the prescription of the Faculty, and to prevent this gentleman from taking my enema? It is very ridiculous of you to be so rash!

BER. Begone, Sir; we see well enough that you are not accustomed to speak to people's faces.

MR. F. One should not thus make fun of physic, and make me waste my time. I have come here only with a good prescription; and I shall go and tell Mr. Purgon how I have been prevented from executing his orders, and from performing my function. You shall see, you shall see . . .

SCENE V.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. You will be the cause of some mishap here, brother.

BER. A great mishap not to take an enema which Mr. Purgon has ordered! Once more, brother, is it possible that there is no way of curing you of that mania for physicians, and that you wish to be buried all the days of your life in their remedies?

ARG. Good Heavens! brother, you talk of it as a man who is in perfect health; but if you were in my place, you would soon change your language. It is easy to talk against physic, when one is in good health.

BER. But what illness have you?

ARG. You will drive me mad. I wish you had it, my

illness, just to see whether you would prate so much. Ah ! here comes Mr. Purgon.

SCENE VI.—MR. PURGON, ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

MR. P. I have just heard some pretty news at the door ; that people are making jest of my prescriptions here, and refuse to take the remedies which I have prescribed.

ARG. Sir, it is not . . .

MR. P. This is a very rash proceeding, a strange revolt of a patient against his physician.

TOI. This is horrible,

MR. P. An enema which I had taken a pleasure in compounding myself.

ARG. It is not I . . .

MR. P. Invented and concocted according to all the rules of the art.

TOI. He is wrong.

MR. P. And which was to produce a marvellous effect on the bowels.

ARG. My brother . . .

MR. P. To send it back with contempt !

ARG. (*Pointing to Beralde*). It is he . . .

MR. P. It is a most daring deed.

TOI. That is true.

MR. P. An enormous outrage against the medical profession.

ARG. (*Pointing to Beralde*). He is the cause . . .

MR. P. A crime of high treason against the Faculty, which cannot be sufficiently punished.

TOI. You are right.

MR. P. I declare that I break off all connection with you.

ARG. It is my brother . . .

MR. P. That I no longer desire an alliance with you.

TOI. You will do well.

MR. P. And that to make an end of all union with you, there is the deed of gift which I made to my nephew, in favour of the marriage. (*He tears the document to pieces, and throws the pieces furiously about.*)

ARG. It is my brother who has done all the harm.

MR. P. To despise my enema !

ARG. Let it be brought ; I will take it.

MR. P. I would have cured you before long.

TOI. He does not deserve it.

MR. P. I was going to cleanse your body, and drive out all the bad humours.

ARG. Ah ! brother !

MR. P. And it wanted but a dozen more medicines to cure you completely.

TOI. He is unworthy of your care.

MR. P. But as you do not wish to be cured by my hands . . .

ARG. It is not my fault.

MR. P. Since you have withdrawn from the obedience which a man owes to his physician . . .

TOI. That cries for vengeance.

MR. P. Since you have declared yourself a rebel against the remedies which I prescribed for you . . .

ARG. Eh, not at all.

MR. P. I must tell you that I give you up to your bad constitution, to the intemperature of your bowels, to the corruption of your blood, to the acrimony of your bile, and to the feculence of your humours.

TOI. That is very well done.

ARG. Oh, Heavens !

MR. P. And I will that in four days you shall be in an incurable state.

ARG. Ah, mercy !

MR. P. That you fall into a bradypepsia.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From bradypepsia into dyspepsia.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From dyspepsia into apepsy.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From apepsy into lientery.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From lientery into dysentery.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. From dysentery into dropsy.

ARG. Mr. Purgon !

MR. P. And from dropsy into a privation of life, whither your folly will lead you.<sup>40</sup>

SCENE VII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Ah, Heavens! I am dead. Brother, you have undone me.

BER. Why! what is the matter?

ARG. I can hold out no longer. I already feel the vengeance of the faculty.

BER. Really, brother, you are mad; and I would not have people see you act as you do, for a great deal. Just bear up a little, I pray; be yourself, and do not give way so much to your imagination.

ARG. You see, brother, the strange diseases with which he has threatened me.

BER. What a simpleton you are!

ARG. He says that I shall become incurable before four days are over.

BER. What does it signify what he says? Is it an oracle that has spoken? To hear you speak, it looks as if Mr. Purgon holds in his hands the thread of your life, and that by a supreme authority he lengthens or shortens it for you, as it pleases him. Remember that the springs of your existence are in yourself, and that the wrath of Mr. Purgon is as little capable of killing you as his remedies are of keeping you alive. Here is an opportunity, if you wish, to rid yourself of the physicians; or if you were born so as not to be able to do without them, it is easy to have another with whom, brother, you may run a little less risk.

ARG. Ah! brother, he knows my entire constitution, and the way how to treat me.

BER. I must confess to you that you are a man of great prejudice, and that you look at matters with strange eyes.

SCENE VIII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*To Argan*). Sir, here is a doctor who wishes to see you.

<sup>40</sup> Bradypepsia is a slow and imperfect digestion; apepsia is a defective digestion; lientery is a diarrhoea, in which the food is discharged only half digested.

ARG. And what doctor?

TOI. A doctor of the Faculty.

ARG. I ask you who he is.

TOI. I do not know him, but he is as like me as two drops of water; and if I were not sure that my mother was an honest woman, I should say that this was some little brother which she has given me since my father's death.

ARG. Let him come in.

SCENE IX.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

BER. You are served according to your wish. One physician leaves you; another presents himself.

ARG. I greatly fear that you may be the cause of some mishap.

BER. Again! You will always harp upon this.

ARG. But look you! All these diseases of which I know nothing weigh on my mind; these . . .

SCENE X.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE, *disguised as a physician.*

TOI. Permit me to pay you this visit, Sir, and to offer you my small services for all the bleedings and purgings of which you may be in want.

ARG. Sir, I am much obliged to you. (*To Béralde*). Upon my word, this is Toinette himself.

TOI. Pray, excuse me, Sir; I have forgotten to give a message to my servant; I shall be back immediately.

SCENE XI.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Eh? would you not swear that it was really Toinette?

BER. It is true that the likeness is very great indeed; but it is not the first time that we have seen this kind of things; and history is full of these freaks of nature.

ARG. As for me, I am amazed at it; and . . .

SCENE XII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.<sup>41</sup>

TOI. What do you want, Sir?

<sup>41</sup> "Toinette has doffed her physician's dress so soon that it is difficult to believe that she appeared as a doctor before." This note is in the edition of Molière's works of 1682.

ARG. How?

TOI. Did not you call me?

ARG. I? no.

TOI. My ears must have tingled then.

ARG. Just remain here a moment, to see how this physician resembles you.

TOI. (*Going out*). Yes, indeed! I have business elsewhere; and I have seen him enough.

SCENE XIII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE ✓

ARG. If I had not seen them both, I should have believed it was but one.

BER. I have read of surprising instances of these kinds of likenesses; and we have seen some of them, in our own times, by which the whole world has been deceived.

ARG. As for me, I should have been deceived by this one; and I should have sworn that it was the same person.

SCENE XIV.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE; TOINETTE, *as a physician*.

TOI. Sir, I ask your pardon with all my heart.

ARG. (*Softly to Béralde*). This is wonderful.

TOI. You will not take amiss, pray, the curiosity which I had to see such an illustrious patient as you; and your reputation, which has spread everywhere, may excuse the liberty which I have taken.

ARG. I am your servant, Sir.

TOI. I perceive, Sir, that you are looking earnestly at me. How old do you really think I am?

ARG. I think that you may be six or seven and twenty at the most.

TOI. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! I am ninety.

ARG. Ninety!

TOI. Yes. You observe an effect of the secrets of my art, to keep myself so fresh and vigorous.

ARG. Upon my word, this is a fine youthful old man for ninety!

✗ TOI. I am an itinerant physician who go from town to town, from province to province, from kingdom to kingdom, in search of illustrious materials for my art, to find patients worthy of my attention, capable of having



applied to them the grand and beautiful secrets which I have discovered in medicine. I disdain to amuse myself with these small fry of ordinary complaints, with trifling rheumatisms and colds, small agues, vapours, and headaches. I want diseases of importance, real non-intermittent fevers, with a disordered brain, real purple fevers, real plagues, real confirmed dropsies, real pleurisies with inflammations of the lungs ; these are what please me ; that is where I triumph ; and I wish, Sir, that you had been given up by all the physicians, despaired of, at the point of death, that I might show you the excellence of my remedies, and the desire which I have to be of service to you.

ARG. I am obliged to you, Sir, for the kindness you have for me.

TOI. Let me feel your pulse. Come, beat as you should. Ah ! I shall make you go as you ought. Ho ! this pulse plays the impertinent ; I perceive well enough that you do not know me as yet. Who is your physician ?

ARG. Mr. Purgon.

TOI. This man is not in my note-book amongst the great physicians. From what does he say that you suffer ?

ARG. He says it is from the liver, and others say it is from the spleen.

TOI. They are all blockheads. It is from the lungs that you are ill.

ARG. From the lungs ?

TOI. Yes. What do you feel ?

ARG. I feel from time to time qualms.

TOI. Exactly, the lungs.

ARG. I seem to have a mist before my eyes sometimes.

TOI. The lungs.

ARG. I have now and then a pain at the heart.

TOI. The lungs.

ARG. I feel a weariness in my limbs at times.

TOI. The lungs.

ARG. And now and then I am taken with pains in the stomach, just as if it were the colics.

TOI. The lungs. Do you relish your food ?

ARG. Yes, Sir.

TOI. The lungs. You like to take a little wine?

ARG. Yes, Sir.

TOI. The lungs. You feel an inclination to take a little nap after your meals, and you are glad to go to sleep?

ARG. Yes, Sir.

TOI. The lungs, the lungs, I tell you. What does the doctor order you to eat?

ARG. He orders me soup.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. Poultry.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. Veal.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. Broth.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. New-laid eggs.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. And in the evening some prunes to loosen the belly.

TOI. The ignorant fellow!

ARG. And above all, to take my wine well diluted.

TOI. *Ignorantus, ignoranta, ignorantum.* You must drink your wine pure, and, to thicken your blood, which is too thin, you must eat good solid beef, good solid pork, good Dutch cheese; groats and rice, and chestnuts and thin cakes, to thicken and conglutinate. Your doctor is an ass. I shall send you one of my choice; and I shall come to see you from time to time, while I am in this town.

ARG. You will oblige me very much.

TOI. What the deuce do you want with this arm?

ARG. How?

TOI. I would have this arm cut off instanter if I were you.

ARG. And why?

TOI. Do you not see that it attracts to itself all the nourishment, and that it prevents this side from growing.

ARG. Yes; but I want my arm.

TOI. You have a right eye there, too, which I would have taken out, if I were in your place.

ARG. An eye taken out?

TOI. Do you not see that it incommodes the other, and robs it of its nourishment? Believe me, have it taken out as quickly as possible; you will see all the clearer with the left eye.

ARG. There is no hurry.

TOI. Farewell. I am sorry to leave you so soon; but I must be present at a great consultation which is to be held about a man who died yesterday.

ARG. About a man who died yesterday?

TOI. Yes: to consider and see what ought to have been done to cure him. Until we meet again.

ARG. You know that invalids are excused from seeing any one to the door.

SCENE XV.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

BER. This physician really seems very clever.

ARG. Yes; but he does things a little too quickly.

BER. All great physicians are like that.

ARG. To cut off an arm, to take out an eye, so that the other may be better! I much prefer that the other should not be quite so well. A fine operation, to make me one-eyed and one-armed.

SCENE XVI.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Pretending to speak to some one outside*). Come, come, I am your humble servant, I am in no mood to be merry.

ARG. What is the matter?

TOI. Your physician, troth who wished to feel my pulse.

ARG. Look at that, at the age of ninety.

BER. Well now! brother, since your Mr. Purgon has fallen out with you, will you not give me leave to speak to you about the match which is proposed for my niece.

ARG. No, brother: I mean to place her in a convent, for having run counter to my wishes. I perceive well enough that there is some love-affair in the case; and I discovered a certain secret interview which they do not know that I have discovered.

BER. Well! brother; and suppose there is some slight

inclination, would that be so very criminal? And can there be aught in it to offend you, when all this aims only at what is honourable, marriage.

ARG. Be that as it may, brother, she shall be a nun; that is a settled thing.

BER. You wish to please some one.

ARG. I understand you. You always come back to that, and you dislike my wife.

BER. Well then! yes, brother: since I am to speak frankly to you, it is your wife I am alluding to; and I can no more bear your infatuation for physic, than your infatuation for her and see you running headlong into all the snares which she spreads for you.

TOI. Ah! Sir, do not talk about my mistress; she is a woman of whom nothing can be said, a woman without any guile, and who loves my master, who loves him . . . One cannot express it.

ARG. Just ask her how she caresses me.

TOI. That is true.

ARG. What uneasiness my illness causes her.

TOI. Assuredly.

ARG. And the care and the pains she takes about me.

TOI. To be sure. (*To Béralde*). Do you wish me to convince you, and to show you immediately how my mistress loves master? (*To Argan*). Allow me to show him his blunder, Sir, and to convince him of his error.<sup>48</sup>

ARG. How?

TOI. The mistress is coming back. Put yourself at full length in this chair, and pretend that you are dead. You shall see the grief she shall be in, when I tell her the news.

ARG. I will do it.

TOI. Yes; but do not leave her long in despair; for she might die of it.

ARG. Leave it to me.

TOI. (*To Béralde*). And you, hide yourself in this corner.

SCENE XVII.—ARGAN, BÉRALDE.

ARG. Is there not some danger in counterfeiting death?

<sup>48</sup> The original has *souffrez que je lui montre son bec-jaune*. See Vol. II., *Don Juan*, page 101, note II.

go to p. 561

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LE BARBOUILLÉ,<sup>3</sup> *Angélique's husband.*

THE DOCTOR.

VALÈRE, *Angélique's lover.*

GORGIBUS, *Angélique's father.*

VIILEBREQUIN.

LA VALLÉE.

ANGÉLIQUE.

CATHAU, *her maid.*

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<sup>3</sup> Le Barbouillé means the besmeared, because probably in former times the actor who played this part rubbed his face with flour.

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## THE JEALOUSY OF LE BARBOUILLÉ.

(*LA JALOUSIE DU BARBOUILLÉ.*)

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### SCENE I.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, *alone.*

It must be admitted that I am the most unfortunate of all men! I have a wife who drives me mad: instead of relieving me and doing things as I like, she makes me wish myself at the devil twenty times a day; instead of staying at home, she likes to go walking about, loves good cheer, and keeps company with I do not know what kind of people. Ah! poor Barbouillé, how wretched you are! She must, however, be punished. Suppose I killed her . . . that idea is worth nothing, for you should be hanged. If you had her put in prison . . . the slut would find a way out of it with her master-key. What the deuce am I to do then? But here is the doctor coming. I must ask him for a bit of advice as to what I am to do.

### SCENE II.—THE DOCTOR, LE BARBOUILLÉ.

BAR. I was coming after you to make a request of you upon a matter of importance to me.

DOC. You must be very badly brought up, very clumsily, and have been reprimanded very insufficiently, friend, to accost me without lifting your hat, without observing *rationem loci, temporis et personæ*. What! to begin with

an ill-arranged discourse, instead of saying: *Salve, vel Salvus sis, Doctor, doctorum eruditissime*. Eh! for whom do you take me, friend?

BAR. Upon my word, I nope you will excuse me, my mind was embarrassed,<sup>4</sup> and I was not paying any attention to what I was doing; but I know full well that you are a gallant gentleman.

DOC. Know you at all whence comes the word "gallant gentleman?"

BAR. Let it come from Villejuif or Aubervilliers, I care little.

DOC. Know that the word gallant gentleman comes from "elegant;" taking the *g* and the *a* of the last syllable, that makes *ga*, then taking *ll*, adding an *a* and the last two letters, that makes *gallant*, and then adding *gentleman*, that makes *gallant gentleman*. But, once more, for whom do you take me?

BAR. I take you for a doctor. But let us talk a little of the affair which I wish to propose to you. You must know then . . .

DOC. Know beforehand that I am not only once a doctor, but that I am a doctor once, twice, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten times. 1st. Because the unit being the basis, the foundation, and the first of all numbers, I am consequently the first of all doctors, the learned of the learned. 2d. Because two faculties are necessary for the perfect knowledge of all things, the senses and the understanding; and, as I am all sense and understanding, I am twice doctor.

BAR. Agreed. It is . . .

DOC. 3d. Because the number of three is that of perfection, according to Aristotle; and, as I am perfect, and all my productions likewise, I am three times doctor.

BAR. Well, Mr. Doctor . . .

DOC. 4th. Because philosophy has four parts: logic, morality, physics, and metaphysics; and, as I possess them all four, and am perfectly versed in them, I am four times doctor.

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<sup>4</sup> The original has, *j'avais l'esprit en écharpe*, I had my mind in a scarf, therefore "awry," "embarrassed."



BAR. What the deuce ! I do not doubt it. Do listen to me then.

DOC. 5TH. Because there are five universals ; the genus, the spices, the difference, the essence, and the accident, without the knowledge of which it becomes impossible to reason well ; and, as I employ them with advantage, and know their usefulness, I am five times doctor.

BAR. I must have a deal of patience.

DOC. 6TH. Because the number six is the number of labour ; and, as I labour incessantly for my glory, I am six times doctor.

BAR. Ho ! speak as much as you like.

DOC. 7TH. Because the number of seven is the number of felicity ; and, as I possess a perfect knowledge of everything that can confer happiness, and as I am so indeed by my talents, I feel obliged to say of myself ; *O ter quaterque beatum !* 8th. Because the number of eight is the number of justice by reason of the equality found in it, and because the justice and prudence with which I measure and weigh all my actions make me eight times doctor. 9th. Because there are nine Muses, and because I am equally beloved by them. 10th. Because, as we cannot pass the number of ten without making a repetition of the other numbers, and because it is the universal number ; so, so, when they have found me they have found the universal doctor ; I contain in my own self all the other doctors. Thus, you perceive by plausible, true, demonstrative, and convincing arguments, that I am once, twice, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten times doctor.

BAR. What the deuce is this ? I expected to find a very learned man, who would give me good advice, and I find a chimney-sweep, who, instead of talking to me, amuses himself by playing Morra<sup>5</sup> with me. One, two, three, four ; ha, ha, ha ! But that is not at all the thing ; I pray you to listen to me, and to think that I am not the man to

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<sup>5</sup> Morra is an Italian game, which consists in holding up quickly some fingers of the hand raised and some shut, and for the opposite player to guess the precise number of the fingers thus held up. As the Doctor in counting probably held up his fingers, Le Barbouillé evidently alludes to the Morra.

make you waste your time, and that, if you satisfy me in what I wish of you, I will give you anything you like; money if you wish it.

DOC. Money, say you?

BAR. Yes, money, and anything else you might like to ask.

DOC. (*Hitching up his gown behind him*). Then you take me to be a man who would do anything for money, a man bound to self-interest, a mercenary<sup>a</sup> soul? Know, friend, that, if you were to give me a purse full of pistoles, if this purse were in a costly box, this box in a precious case, this case in a wondrous casket, this casket in a curious cabinet, this cabinet in a magnificent room, this room in an agreeable apartment, this apartment in a splendid castle, this castle in a matchless citadel, this citadel in a famous town, this town in a fruitful island, this island in an opulent province, this province in a flourishing kingdom, this kingdom stretching over the whole world; and that you would give me this world in which should be this flourishing kingdom, in which should be this opulent province, in which should be this fruitful island, in which should be this famous town, in which should be this matchless citadel, in which should be this splendid castle, in which should be this agreeable apartment, in which should be this curious cabinet, in which should be this wondrous casket, in which should be this precious case, in which should be this costly box, and in which should be enclosed this purse full of pistoles, I should care as little about your money and about yourself as about that.

(*He departs.*)

BAR. Upon my word! I have made a mistake; I thought it well to speak to him of money, because he was dressed as a physician; but as he does not want it, nothing is easier than to satisfy him: I will run after him.

(*He goes off.*)

SCENE III.—ANGÉLIQUE, VALÈRE, CATHAU.

AN. I assure you, Sir, that you will oblige me greatly by keeping me company now and then; my husband is so ill-shaped, so debauched, such a drunkard, that it is

torture to me to be with him, and I leave you to guess what pleasure one can derive from a clodhopper like him.

VAL. Madam,<sup>6</sup> you do me too much honour in bearing with me. I promise you to contribute everything in my power for your entertainment; and, since you confess that my society is not disagreeable to you, I shall show you by my attentions how much pleased I am at the news which you tell me.

CA. Ah! change your conversation; here comes kill-joy.<sup>7</sup>

SCENE IV.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, VALÈRE, ANGÉLIQUE,  
CATHAU.

VAL. I am in despair, Madam, at having to bring you such grievous tidings; but you might have learned them from some one else; and, as your brother is very ill . . .

AN. Sir, do not tell me any more; I am your servant, and feel obliged to you for the trouble you have taken.

BAR. Upon my word, here is the certificate of my cuckoldom, without going to the notary for it. Ha! ha! mistress slut, I find you with a man, after all my orders to the contrary, and you wish to send me from Gemini to Capricorn!<sup>8</sup>

AN. Well! need you grumble about that? This gentleman has come to tell me that my brother is very ill: what is there to complain?

CA. Ah! here it is; I was wondering that we should be quiet so long.

BAR. Upon my word, you are spoiling one another, you sluts; you Cathau, you are corrupting my wife: since you have been in her service, she is not worth half of what she was before.

CA. Indeed yes, a pretty story that!

AN. Leave the sot alone; do you not see that he is so drunk that he does not know what he is saying.

<sup>6</sup> The original has *Mademoiselle*, see Prefatory Notice, Vol. I., page 32, note 14.

<sup>7</sup> The original has *porte-guignon*, bearer of ill-luck.

<sup>8</sup> See Rabelais' *Pantagruel*, book iii. ch. xxv. "How Panurge consulteth with Herr Trippa."

SCENE V.—GORGIBUS, VILLEBREQUIN, ANGÉLIQUE,  
CATHAU, LE BARBOUILLÉ.

GOR. Here is my cursed son-in-law quarrelling with my daughter again!

VIL. Find out what it is.

GOR. What! always squabbling! Will you never have any peace among you?

BAR. This wretch calls me sot. (*To Angélique*). Hold, I have got a good mind to slap your face<sup>9</sup> in the presence of your relatives.

GOR. Cursed be the purse, if you have done what he reproaches you with.<sup>10</sup>

AN. But it is he who always begins to . . .

CA. Cursed be the hour in which you chose this curmudgeon!

VIL. Come, hold your tongue; peace!

SCENE VI.—GORGIBUS, VILLEBREQUIN, ANGÉLIQUE,  
CATHAU, LE BARBOUILLÉ, THE DOCTOR.

DOC. What is this? What disorder! what quarrelling! what wrangling! what noise! what confusion! what falling out! what a flare-up! What is the matter, gentlemen, what is the matter? what is the matter? Come, come, let us see if there is no way of making you agree; let me be your peacemaker; let me bring union among you.

GOR. It is my daughter and my son-in-law who have some quarrel between them.

DOC. And what is it? Just tell me the cause of their difference.

GOR. Sir . . .

DOC. But in few words.

GOR. Yes: but put on your bonnet.

DOC. Do you know whence comes the word "bonnet"?

GOR. No, indeed.

<sup>9</sup> The original has *je suis bien tenté de te bailler une quinte major*, I am much tempted to give you a high sequence of five. The expression *quinte major*, now called *quinte majeure*, belongs to the game of piquet, for which see Vol. I. *The Impertinents*, Act ii., Scene 2.

<sup>10</sup> The original has *Je dédonne au diable l'escarcelle si vous l'aviez fait*. This phrase is very obscure; I have followed the explanation given by the late Mr. E. Despois.

DOC. It comes from *bonum est*, good is, that is good, because it keeps you from catarrhs and colds.

GOR. Upon my word, I did not know that.

DOC. But just tell me quickly about this quarrel.

GOR. This is what happened . . .

DOC. I do not think that you are the man to detain me long, especially as I request you not to do so. I have some pressing business which calls me into town; but, to restore peace in your family, I do not mind stopping for a moment.

GOR. I shall have done in a moment.

DOC. Be quick then.

GOR. Done immediately.

DOC. You must admit, Mr. Gorgibus, that it is a fine gift to be able to say things in a few words, and that great talkers, instead of being listened to, often make themselves so obnoxious that one does not hear them; *virtutem primam esse puta compescere linguam*.<sup>11</sup> Yes, the finest quality in a gentleman is to speak little.

GOR. You must know then . . .

DOC. Socrates recommended three things very carefully to his disciples: prudence in actions, sobriety in eating, and to say things in few words. Begin then, Mr. Gorgibus.

GOR. That is what I wish to do.

DOC. In few words, without ceremony, without amusing yourself with many speeches, spare me an apophthegm;<sup>12</sup> quick, quick, Mr. Gorgibus, hurry on, avoid prolixity.

GOR. Let me speak then.

DOC. Mr. Gorgibus, shake hands, you speak too much; some one else will have to tell me the cause of this quarrel.

VIL. You must know then, Mr. Doctor . . .

DOC. You are an ignoramus, an illiterate, a man devoid of all method and order,<sup>13</sup> in good French, an ass. What!

<sup>11</sup> "Believe that the first of virtues is to restrain one's tongue." This is one of Erasmus' distichs.

<sup>12</sup> In *The Forced Marriage* Panrace says to Sganarelle, *Tranchez-moi votre discours d'un apophthegme à la laconienne*, Contract your discourse into a Laconian apophthegm. See Vol. I., scene 6, page 484.

<sup>13</sup> In *The Forced Marriage* Panrace calls Sganarelle *un homme ignare de tout bonne discipline*, a man ignorant of all method and order. See Vol. I., Scene 6, page 489.

you commence your narrative without a word of exordium ! Some one else will have to narrate the quarrel. Madam, tell me the particulars of this confusion.

AN. Well ! you see, my big scamp, my wine jug of a husband ?

DOC. Gently, if you please : speak with respect of your husband, when before the beard of a doctor like myself.

AN. Ah ! indeed, yes, doctor ! I care a deal about you and your doctrine, and I am a doctor when I like.

DOC. You are a doctor when you like ; but I think that you would make a funny doctor. You look to me much as if you would follow your own fancies : of the parts of speech, you like but the conjunction ; of the genders, the masculine ; of the declensions, the genitive : of syntax, *mobile cum fixo*, and, in short, of quantity, you love but the dactyl, *quia constat ex una longa et duabus brevibus*.<sup>14</sup> Come now, just tell me the cause, the subject of your combustion.

BAR. Mr. Doctor . . .

DOC. Ah ! that is well begun ; Mr. Doctor, this word has something sweet to the ear, something full of emphasis ; Mr. Doctor !

BAR. According to my will . . .

DOC. That is good . . . according to my will ! The will presupposes the wish, the wish presupposes the means arriving at its ends, and the end presupposes an object ; that is good . . . according to my will.

BAR. I am bursting with rage.

DOC. Take out that word, I am bursting with rage ; it is a low and vulgar term.

BAR. Eh ! Mr. Doctor, do listen to me, I pray you.

DOC. *Audi, quaeso*,<sup>15</sup> Cicero would have said.

BAR. Ah ! upon my word, if it breaks,<sup>16</sup> smashes, or is destroyed, I hardly care ; but you shall hear me, or I will smash your doctoral snout ; and what the devil is this ?

(*Le Barbouillé, Angélique, Gorgibus, Cathau, Ville-*

<sup>14</sup> This Latin cannot be translated. The rule *mobile cum fixo* is taken from Despautère's Syntax. See *The Countess of Escarbagnas*, Scene 19, page 417, note 17.

<sup>15</sup> A Latin translation of Le Barbouillé's words.

<sup>16</sup> The original has *si se rompt*, a pun on the name *Cicéron*.

*brequin, each wishing to tell the cause of the quarrel, and the Doctor saying that peace is a fine thing, speak all at once. In the midst of all this noise Le Barbouillé fastens a rope to the Doctor's foot, and makes him fall on his back; Le Barbouillé drags him away by the rope, which he had fastened to his foot, while the Doctor endeavours to speak and to count upon his fingers all his reasons, as if he had not fallen down at all. Le Barbouillé and the Doctor disappear.*

GOR. Come daughter, go inside, and try to live in peace with your husband.

VIL. Farewell, good night, and your servant.

*(Villebrequin, Gorgibus, and Angélique go away.)*

SCENE VII.—VALÈRE, LA VALLÉE.

VAL. I am obliged to you for the pains you have taken, Sir, and I promise you to be at the appointed place in an hour.

LA VAL. It cannot be postponed; and if you but delay a quarter of an hour, the ball will be finished: you shall not have the satisfaction of seeing her whom you love if you do not come directly.

VAL. Let us go together this very moment.

*(They go away.)*

SCENE VIII.—ANGÉLIQUE, *alone.*

While my husband is out of the way, I shall go and take a turn at a ball, which one of my neighbours is giving. I shall be back before him, for he is somewhere in the tavern; he will not notice that I am out; the rascal leaves me alone at home, as if I were his dog. *(She goes.)*

SCENE IX.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, *alone.*

I knew well enough that I would get the better of this doctor and all his confounded doctrine. To the devil with the ignorant fellow! I have nicely knocked all his science to the ground. I must, however, go and see if the wife has prepared my supper. *(He goes.)*

SCENE X.—ANGÉLIQUE, *alone.*

How unlucky I am! I came too late, the party is over: I arrived just as every one was going; but never

mind, it will be for another time. I shall go home, however, as if nothing had happened. Why! the door is locked; Cathau, Cathau!

SCENE XI.—LE BARBOUILLÉ, *at the window*, ANGÉLIQUE.

BAR. Cathau, Cathau! Well, what has she done, Cathau? and whence come you, Madam slut, at this hour, and in such weather?

AN. Whence come I? just open the door, and I shall tell you afterwards.

BAR. Ah! indeed, you can go and sleep where you came from, or, if you like it better, in the street; I will not open the door to such a gad-about as you. What the deuce! to be all alone at such an hour! I do not know whether it is my fancy, but my forehead seems half as rough again as it usually is.

AN. Well! and what if I am alone, what do you mean by it? You quarrel with me when I have company: what would you have me do?

BAR. You ought to have been within, to look after the supper, to take care of the house, of the children; but, without so many useless words, good-bye, good-night, go to the devil, and leave me in peace.

AN. You will not open to me?

BAR. No, I shall not open.

AN. Eh! my dear little husband, open, I beg of you, my dear sweetheart.

BAR. Ah! you crocodile! ah! you dangerous serpent! you are caressing me to betray me.

AN. Open, open then.

BAR. Good-bye! *Vade retro, Satanas!*

AN. What! you will not open?

BAR. No!

AN. And you have no pity on the wife who loves you so much?

BAR. No, I am inflexible; you have offended me, I am as vindictive as the devil, that is, putting it more strongly, I am inexorable.

AN. Are you aware that, if you drive me to despair, and make me angry, I shall do something which you will regret?

BAR. And what will you do, you nice she-dog?



AN. There; if you do not open to me, I shall kill myself before the door; my parents who will no doubt come here before going to bed, to know if we have made it up together, will find me dead, and you shall be hanged.

BAR. Ah, ah, ah, ah, the great ninny! and who of the two will lose most by that? Go, go, you are not so foolish as to do such a trick as that.

AN. You will not believe it then? There, there, here is my knife quite ready; if you do not open to me, I shall plunge it into my heart this very moment.

BAR. Take care, the point is very sharp.

AN. You will not open to me?

BAR. I have told you a score of times already that I will not open; kill yourself, die, go to the devil; what do I care.

AN. (*Pretending to stab herself*). Good-bye then . . . Ah! I am dead.

BAR. Can she have been fool enough to do such a trick? I must go down with the candle to see.<sup>17</sup>

AN. I must catch you. If I can get cunningly into the house while you are looking for me, it will be my turn next.

BAR. Well! just as if I ought not to have known that she was not such a fool. She is dead; and, however, she runs like Pacolet's horse.<sup>18</sup> Upon my word, she has really given me a fright. She has done well to get out of the way; for if I had found her alive, after having given me such a fright, I should have dealt her five or six kicks to teach her to play the fool. I shall go to bed now. Oh! oh! I think that the wind has closed the door. Eh! Cathau, Cathau, open the door.

AN. Cathau, Cathau! Well? what has she done to you, Cathau? and whence come you, Master sot? Ah! indeed, my parents, who will be here in a minute, shall know

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<sup>17</sup> Molière has employed a great part of this scene in the eighth scene of the third act of *George Dandin*. See Vol. II., p. 560.

<sup>18</sup> In the legend of *Valentine and Orson*, Pacolet is a dwarf in the service of Lady Clerimond, who has an enchanted flying horse of wood, which was very swift, and carried the rider anywhere. Rabelais mentions the horse in the twenty-fourth chapter of the second book of *Pantagruel*.

the truth. Wine-barrel, infamous wretch, you do not stir from the tavern, and you leave a poor woman with her little ones to dance attendance upon you all day long, without caring whether they want for anything or not.

BAR. Open quickly, you she-devil, or I shall break your head.

SCENE XII.—GORGIBUS, VILLEBREQUIN, ANGÉLIQUE, LE BARBOUILLÉ.

GOR. What is this! always disputes, quarrels, and dissensions.

VIL. Eh, what! will you never be agreed?

AN. But just look, here he is drunk, and comes back at this hour, to make a horrible noise; he threatens me.

GOR. But this is also not a time to come home. Ought you not, as a good father of a family, to retire early and live in concord with your wife?

BAR. May the devil take me if I have stirred away from the house: just ask these gentlemen who are yonder in the pit; it is she who has just come back. Ah! how innocence is oppressed.

VIL. Come, come, make it up; ask her pardon.

BAR. I! pardon! I would sooner have the devil run away with her. I am so angry that I do not know what I am doing.

GOR. Come, daughter, kiss your husband, and be good friends.<sup>19</sup>

SCENE XIII.—THE DOCTOR, *at the window, in his night-cap and vest*; LE BARBOUILLÉ, VILLEBREQUIN, GORGIBUS, ANGÉLIQUE.

DOC. What! for ever noise, disorder, dissension, quarrels, debates, differences, combustions, and never ceasing altercations? What is the matter? what is it then? There is no peace to be had.

<sup>19</sup> These three last scenes have been utilized by Molière in the eighth and following Scenes of the third Act of *George Dandin* (see Vol. II., p. 560; just as the scenes in which the Doctor appears seem to be the outline of the sixth Scene of the second Act of *The Love Tiff* (see Vol. I., p. 97, and of the sixth Scene of *The Forced Marriage* (see Vol. I., p. 484.

VIL. It is nothing, Sir Doctor ; everyone is agreed.

DOC. Talking of agreed, would you like me to read you a chapter of Aristotle, in which he proves that all the parts of the universe exist only because they agree among themselves ?<sup>20</sup>

VIL. Is it very long ?

DOC. No, not very long : it contains about sixty or eighty pages.

VIL. Good-bye, good-night, we are much obliged to you.

GOR. No, we do not want it.

DOC. You do not wish for it ?

GOR. No.

DOC. Good-bye then, since it is even so ; good-night :  
*latine, bona nox.*

VIL. Let us go and sup together.

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<sup>20</sup> This may perhaps be the fifth chapter of the apocryphal treatise, *About the World*. It is not very long ; but the doctor was probably going to comment upon it.



TOI. No, no. What danger should there be? Only stretch yourself out there. (*Softly*). It will be a pleasure to confound your brother. Here comes the mistress. Steady as you are.

SCENE XVIII.—BÉLINE, ARGAN, *stretched out in his chair*;  
TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Pretending not to see Béline*). Ah! good Heavens! Ah! what a misfortune! What a strange accident!

BEL. What ails you, Toinette?

TOI. Ah! mistress!

BEL. What is the matter?

TOI. Your husband is dead.

BEL. My husband is dead?

TOI. Alas! yes! the poor man is gone.

BEL. Are you sure?

TOI. I am sure. No one knows the accident as yet; and I was here all alone. He just now passed away in my arms. Look, there he is at full length in his chair.

BEL. Heaven be praised for it! I have got rid of a great burden. How silly you are, Toinette, to make yourself miserable about this death!

TOI. I thought, mistress, that I ought to cry.

BEL. Come, come, it is not worth while. What do we lose in him; and what good was he upon the earth? A man who was a trouble to everybody, dirty, disgusting, never without some enema or physic in him, always blowing his nose, coughing or spitting; without sense, tiresome, bad-tempered, for ever fatiguing people, and scolding night and day the maids and the servants.

TOI. This is a pretty funeral oration!

BEL. You must help me, Toinette, to execute my plan; and you may depend upon it that, in helping me, your reward shall be sure. Since, by good fortune, no one has as yet been told of the affair, let us carry him to his bed, and keep his death secret, until I have managed my business. There are some papers, there is some money which I wish to get hold of; and it would not be just that I should have fruitlessly wasted the prime of my years with him. Come, Toinette; let us first of all take his keys.

ARG. (*Suddenly getting up*). Gently.

BEL. Oh !

ARG. Aha ! my lady, that is how you love me !

TOI. Ah ! Ah ! the dead man is not dead.

ARG. (*To Béline, who is going*). I am very glad to see your good feeling, and to have heard the fine panegyric which you have pronounced on me. This is a wholesome advice which will make me more prudent for the future, and which will prevent me from doing many things.<sup>48</sup>

SCENE XIX.—BÉRALDE, *coming out of the corner where he has been hidden*; ARGAN, TOINETTE.

BER. Well, brother, you see now ?

TOI. Upon my word, I should never have believed this. But I hear your daughter. Place yourself again as you were, and let us see in what manner she will take your death. It is not a bad thing to find out ; and, while you are about it, you shall know, by these means, the feelings of your family for you.

(*Béralde goes into hiding again.*)

SCENE XX.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE.

TOI. (*Pretending not to see Angélique*). Oh, Heaven ! Ah, sad event ! Unhappy day !

AN. What ails you Toinette ? and why do you cry ?

TOI. Alas ! I have sad news to tell you.

AN. Eh ! what ?

TOI. Your father is dead.

AN. My father is dead, Toinette ?

TOI. Yes. There he is. He has just died of a fainting fit that took him.

AN. Oh, Heaven ! what a misfortune ! what a cruel blow ! Alas ! am I to lose my father, the only thing I had left in the world ; and, still more, to complete my unhappiness, must I lose him in a moment when he was angry with me ! What is to become of me, unhappy being ? and what consolation shall I find after so great a loss ?

<sup>48</sup> The primary idea of the character of Béline is to be found in a farce, played before Molière came to Paris, and called *The Sick Husband* ;—wherein a wife rejoices, with her lover, on hearing of the death of her spouse.

SCENE XXI.—ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE.

CLE. What is the matter, fair Angelique? and what misfortune are you bewailing?

AN. Alas! I am bewailing all that I could lose of what is most dear and precious in life; I am bewailing the death of my father.

CLE. Oh, Heavens! what an accident! what an unforeseen blow. Alas! after the request for your hand which I besought your uncle to make for me, I came to introduce myself to him, and to try, by my respects and entreaties, to dispose his heart to grant you to my love.

AN. Ah! Cléante! let us no longer talk of anything; let us leave all thoughts of marriage. After the loss of my father, I will no longer belong to this world, and I renounce it forever. Yes, father, if I have just now opposed your inclinations, I shall at least carry out one of your intentions, and make amends, by that, for the grief which I accuse myself of having caused you. (*Throwing herself at his feet*). Suffer me, father, now to pledge you my word, and to embrace you, to show you my repentance.

ARG. (*Embracing Angélique*). Ah! daughter.

AN. Oh!

ARG. Come. Have no fear; I am not dead. There, you are my own flesh and blood, my own dear daughter; and I am delighted to have seen your good feeling.

SCENE XXII.—ARGAN, TOINETTE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, BÉRALDE.

AN. Ah! what an agreeable surprise! Father, since, by an extreme good fortune, Heaven has given you back to my love, suffer me to throw myself at your feet to beseech you for one thing. If you are not favourable to the inclination of my heart; if you refuse me Cléante for a husband, I implore you, at least, not to force me to marry another. This is all the favour I ask of you.

CLE. (*Throwing himself at Argan's feet*). Oh! Sir, allow yourself to be touched by her prayers and mine; and do not show yourself opposed to the mutual ardour of such a fine affection.

BER. Can you still hold out, brother?

TOI. Can you be insensible to so much love, Sir?

ARG. Let him become a doctor, and I consent to the marriage. (*To Cléante*). Yes, become a physician, and I give you my daughter.

CLE. With all my heart, Sir. If it depends but upon this to be your son-in-law, I shall become a doctor, an apothecary even, if you wish it. It is not much to do, and I would consent to many other things to obtain the fair Angélique.

BER. But, brother, a thought comes into my head. Become a physician yourself. The convenience will be still greater of having within yourself all that you need.

TOI. That is true. That is the proper way of getting quickly cured; and there is no complaint so daring as to meddle with the person of a physician.

ARG. I think that you are jesting with me, brother. Am I of an age to study?

BER. To study! that is good. You are learned enough; and there are many among them, who are not more clever than you are.

ARG. But one should know to speak Latin well, understand the diseases, and the remedies to apply.

BER. In receiving the gown and the cap of a physician, you will learn all that; and you will afterwards be more skilful than you like to be.

ARG. What! do people know how to discourse upon diseases when they have on that gown?

BER. Yes. You have but to speak with a gown and a cap, and any gibberish becomes learned, and all nonsense becomes sense.

TOI. There, Sir, if it was only for your beard, that goes a great way already; for the beard makes more than half of the physician.

CLE. In any case, I am ready to do everything.

BER. Will you have the thing done immediately?

ARG. How, immediately?

BER. Yes, and in your own house.

ARG. In my own house?

BER. Yes. I know a body of physicians, friends of mine, who will come instantly and perform the ceremony in your hall. It will cost you nothing.



ARG. But I, what am I to say? what to answer?

BER. You will be instructed in two words, and they will give you in writing what you are to say. Go and put on a decent dress. I shall go and fetch them.

ARG. Well, let us see all this.

SCENE XXIII.—BÉRALDE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE,  
TOINETTE.

CLE. What do you mean? and what do you understand by these physician friends of yours?

TOI. What is your plan, then?

BER. To amuse ourselves a little this evening. The comedians have composed a slight interlude about the installation of a physician with music and dances. I wish that we should enjoy the entertainment together, and that my brother should play the principal personage in it.

AN. But, uncle, I think that you are jesting a little too much with my father.

BER. But, niece, it is rather accommodating ourselves to his whims than jesting with him. All this is only between ourselves. We can each of us take a part in it ourselves, and thus perform the comedy for one another. The carnival authorizes all this. Come, let us quickly go and get everything ready.

CLE. (*To Angélique*). Do you consent?

AN. Yes, since my uncle manages the affair.

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THIRD INTERLUDE.

*A Burlesque Ceremony of admitting a Doctor of Medicine in recitative Music and Dancing.*

*Several upholsterers enter to prepare the hall, and place the benches to music. After which the whole assembly, composed of eight syringe-bearers, six apothecaries, twenty-two doctors, and the person that is to be admitted physician, eight surgeons dancing, and two singing, enter, and take their places, each according to his rank.*

**PRAESES.** Savantissimi Doctores,<sup>44</sup>  
 Medicinæ Professores,  
 Qui hic assemblati estis ;  
 Et vos, altri messiores,  
 Sententiarum Facultatis  
 Fideles executores ;  
 Chirurgiani et apothecari,  
 Atque tota compania aussi,  
 Salus, honor, et argentum,  
 Atque bonum appetitum.

Non possum, docti confreri  
 En moi satis admirari,  
 Qualis bona inventio,  
 Est medici professio ;  
**Quàm** bella chosa est et benè trovata,  
 Medicina illa benedicta,  
 Quæ, suo nomine solo,  
 Surprenanti miraculo,  
 Depuis si longo tempore,  
 Facit à gogo vivere  
 Tant de gens omni genere.

Per totam terrum videmus  
 Grandam vogam ubi sumus ;  
 Et quods grandes et petiti  
 Sunt de nobis infatuti.  
**Totus** mundus, currens ad nostros remedios,  
 Nos regardat sicut deos,  
 Et nostris ordonnanciis  
**Principes et Reges** soumissos videtis.

Doncque il est nostræ sapientiæ,  
 Boni sensus atque prudentiæ,  
 De fortement travailler  
 A nos bene conservare  
**In tali** credito, voga et honore ;

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<sup>44</sup> In this interlude there is such an amount of Latin, dog-Latin, Italian, French, and of words belonging to no language under the sun, that, by rendering any of it into English, the effect of the whole is greatly marred. I have, therefore, left it in the original.

Et prendre gardam à non recevoir  
In nostro docto corpore,  
Quam personas capabiles,  
Et totas dignas remplir  
Has plaças honorabiles.  
C'est pour cela que nunc convocatis estis;  
Et credo quod trovabitis  
Dignam materiam medici  
In savanti homine que voici;  
Lequel, in chosis omnibus;  
Dono ad interrogandum,  
Et à fond examinandum  
Vostreis capacitatibus.

## PRIMUS DOCTOR.

Si mihi licentiam dat dominus praeses,  
Et tanti docti doctores,  
Et assistantes illustres,  
Très-savanti bacheliero,  
Quem estimo honoro,  
Domandabo causam et rationem quare  
Opium facit dormire.

## BACHELIERUS.

Mihi à docto doctore.  
Domandatur causam et rationem quare  
Opium facit dormire.  
À quoi respondeo;  
Quia est in eo  
Virtus dormitiva,  
Cujus est natura  
Sensus assoupire. <sup>45</sup>

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene respondere.  
Dignus, dignus est intrare  
In nostro docto corpore.  
Bene, bene respondere.

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<sup>45</sup>In Descartes' time, and before him, everything was explained by forms, virtues, entities, quiddities. A thing was cold because it had a frigorific virtue; hot because it had a calorific virtue.

## SECUNDUS DOCTOR.

Cum permissione domini præsidis  
Doctissimæ Facultatis,  
Et totius his nostris actis  
Companiæ assistantis,  
Domandabo tibi, docte bacheliere.  
Quæ sunt remedia  
Quæ, in maladia  
Dite hydropisia  
Convenit facere?

## BACHELIERUS.

Clysterium donare,  
Postea seignare,  
Ensuita purgare.

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene respondere.  
Dignus, dignus, est intrare  
In nostros docto corpore.

## TERTIUS DOCTOR.

Si bonum semblatur domino præsidi,  
Doctissimæ Facultati,  
Et companiæ præsentis,  
Domandabo tibi, docte bacheliere,  
Quæ remedia eticis,  
Pulmonicis atque asmaticis  
Trovais à propos facere.

## BACHELIERUS.

Clysterium donare,  
Postea seignare,  
Ensuita purgare.

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene respondere.  
Dignus, dignus est intrare  
In nostro docto corpore.

## QUARTUS DOCTOR.

Super illas maladias,  
Doctus bachelierus dixit maravillas;  
Mais, si non ennuyo dominum præsidem,  
Doctissimam Facultatem,  
Et totam honorabilem  
Companiam ecoutantem;

Faciam illi unam questionem.  
Dès hiero maladus unus  
Tombavit in meas manus ;  
Habet grandam fievram cum redoublamentis,  
Grandam dolorem capitis,  
Et grandum malum au côté.  
Cum granda difficultate  
Et pena de respirare.  
Veillas mihi dire,  
Docte bacheliere  
Quid illi facere.

BACHELIERUS.

Clysterium donare,  
Postea seignare,  
Ensuita purgare.

QUINTUS DOCTOR.

Mais, si maladia  
Opiniatria  
Non vult se garire,  
Quid illi facere ?

BACHELIERUS. Clysterium donare

Postea seignare,  
Ensuita purgare.

Reseignare, repurgare, et reclysterisare.

CHORUS. Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere :

Dignus, dignus est intrare  
In nostro docto corpore.

PRAESES.

Juras gardare statuta  
Per Facultatem præscripta,  
Cum sensu et jugeamento ?

BACHELIERUS. Juro.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> It is said that Molière felt so ill on pronouncing these words, at the fourth representation of *The Imaginary Invalid*, that he could not get on any longer, and the curtain was obliged to fall.

**PRAESES.** Essere in omnibus  
Consultationibus,  
Ancieni aviso,  
Aut bono,  
Aut mauvaiso?

**BACHELIERUS.** Juro.

**PRAESES.** De non jamais te servir  
De remediis aucunis,  
Quam de ceux seulement doctæ Facultatis,  
Maladus dût-il crevare  
Et mori de suo malo?

**BACHELIERUS.** Juro.

**PRAESES.** Ego, cum isto boneto  
Venerabili et docto,  
Dono tibi et concedo  
Virtutem et puissanciam  
Medicandi,  
Purgandi,  
Seignandi,  
Perçandi,  
Taillandi,  
Coupandi,  
Et occidendi  
Impune per totam terram.

*Entry of the Ballet.*

*All the Surgeons and Apothecaries come to do him reverence  
to Music.*

**BACH.** Grandes doctores doctrinæ  
De la rhubarbe et du séné,  
Ce serait sans douta à moi chosa folla,  
Inepta et ridicula,  
Si j'alloibam m' engageare  
Vobis louangeas donare,  
Et entreprendoibam adjoutare  
Des lumieras au soleillo,  
Et des etoilas au cielo,  
Des ondas à l' Oceano;  
Et des rosas au printano.

Agreate qu' avec uno moto  
 Pro toto remercimento  
 Rendam gratias corpori tam docto.  
 Vobis, vobis debeo  
 Bien plus qu' à naturæ et qu' à patri meo.  
 Natura et pater meus  
 Hominem me habent factum ;  
 Mais vos me, ce qui est bien plus,  
 Avetis factum medicum :  
 Honor, favor et gratia,  
 Qui, in hoc corde que voilà,  
 Imprimant ressentimenta  
 Qui dureront in secula.

CHORUS. Vivat, vivat, vivat, vivat, cent fois vivat  
 Novus doctor, qui tam bene parlat !  
 Mille, mille annis, et manget et bibat,  
 Et seignet et tuat !

*Third Entry of the Ballet.*

*All the Surgeons and Apothecaries dance to the sound of the  
 Instruments and Voices, and clapping of hands, and  
 Apothecaries' Mortars.*

*Chirurgus.* Puisse-t-il voir doctas  
 Suas ordonnancias,  
 Omnium chirurgorum,  
 Et apothicarum  
 Remplire boutiquas !

*Chorus.* Vivat, vivat, vivat, vivat, cent fois vivat,  
 Novus doctor, qui, tam bene parlat  
 Mille, mille annis, et manget et bibat,  
 Et seignet et tuat !

*Chirurgus.* Puissent toti anni  
 Lui essere boni  
 Et favorabiles,  
 Et n' habere jamais  
 Quam pestas, verolas,  
 Fievras, pleuresias  
 Fluxus de sang et dyssenterias !

*Chorus.* Vivat, vivat, vivat, vivat, cent fois vivat,  
Novus doctor, qui tam bene parlat !  
Mille, mille annis, et magnet et bibat,  
Et seignet et tuat !

*The Doctors, Surgeons and Apothecaries go out all according  
to their several ranks, with the same ceremony as they  
entered.*<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> There exists also an addition to the ceremony, namely, speeches of three other doctors, and some variations in those of the physicians who have spoken, as well as in other parts of the ceremony. But as these changes are found only in the editions of Rouen and Amsterdam, and are most probably not by Molière, we do not give them here.



LA JALOUSIE DU BARBOUILLÉ  
COMÉDIE.

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THE JEALOUSY OF LE BARBOUILLÉ.  
A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.  
*(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)*



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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*The Jealousy of le Barbonillé* is probably an imitation of one of the Italian *commedia del' arte*, and was composed when Molière was traveling in the provinces, when he sketched or wrote a certain number of comediettas, or rather farces, to amuse his country audiences.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to say when they were first performed, though a few were acted even after Molière's return to Paris.

The manuscript of *The Jealousy of le Barbonillé*, and of the following farce, *The Flying Doctor*, was, in 1731, in the hands of Jean Baptiste Rousseau, who lived then at Brussels. They were first published in 1819, and have since that time been generally added to the other dramatic works of Molière. The subject of *The Jealousy of le Barbonillé* appears to be taken from one of Boccaccio's tales,<sup>2</sup> which was afterwards developed in *George Dandin*.

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<sup>1</sup> The titles of some of these farces are to be found in the Prefatory Memoir of Molière, Vol. I., page xxv.

<sup>2</sup> See Introductory Notice to *George Dandin*, Vol. II., page 517.



LE MÉDECIN VOLANT.  
COMÉDIE.

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THE FLYING DOCTOR.  
A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.  
*(THE ORIGINAL IN PROSE.)*

VOL. III.

2 N



## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

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THE subject of *The Flying Doctor* is probably imitated from an Italian farce, *Il Medico Volante*, which was never printed, but often acted, and in which the celebrated Harlequin, Dominico, who arrived at Paris in 1660, produced some sensation. Boursault (see Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I., p. 435,) wrote also a *Flying Doctor*, which was acted in the month of November 1661, at the Hotel de Bourgogne, and which is taken either from the Italian farce from which Molière borrowed his play, or from Molière himself.

*The Flying Doctor* was acted several times in Paris, from the years 1659 until 1664, and twice at Court.

Molière made use of several of the scenes of this farce for his *Love is the Best Doctor* (see Vol. II., p. 135, and *The Physician in Spite of Himself* (see Vol. II., p. 247.).

1

2

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5



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GORGIBUS, *Lucile's father.*

VALÈRE, *Lucile's lover.*

SGANARELLE, *his servant.*<sup>1</sup>

GROS-RENÉ, *Gorgibus' servant.*<sup>2</sup>

A LAWYER.

LUCILE, *Gorgibus' daughter.*

SABINE, *her cousin.*

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<sup>1</sup> Sganarelle is, in *The Physician in Spite of Himself* (see Vol. II., p. 249,) also the name of the servant, disguised as a physician.

<sup>2</sup> See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I., page 435.



## THE FLYING DOCTOR.

(*LE MÉDECIN VOLANT.*)

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### SCENE I.—VALÈRE, SABINE.

VAL. Well! Sabine, what advice do you give me?

SAB. Really, there is a good deal of news. My uncle wishes resolutely that my cousin should wed Villebrequin, and matters are so far advanced that I believe they would have been married this very day, if you were not loved; but, as my cousin has confided to me the secret of her love for you, and as we find ourselves reduced to extremities through the avarice of my niggardly uncle, we have bethought ourselves of a capital trick to delay the marriage. At the moment I am speaking to you, my cousin is pretending to be ill; and the good old man, who is sufficiently credulous, has sent me to fetch a doctor. If you could send one of your intimate friends, to act in concert with us, he would advise the patient to take the country air. The old man could not fail to lodge my cousin in the pavilion which is at the end of the garden, and, by this means, you could converse with her without the old man's knowledge, marry her, and let him swear his fill with Villebrequin.

VAL. But the difficulty is to find so quickly a doctor such as I wish, and who would be willing to risk so much in my service. I tell you candidly. I do not know one.

SAB. I have bethought myself of something. Suppose

you dress your servant up as a doctor: there is nothing easier than to hoodwink the old man.

VAL. He is a clumsy lout who would spoil everything; but for want of some one else, we must make use of him. Farewell, I am going to fetch him. Where am I to find that scoundrel just now? but here he comes quite opportunely.

SCENE II.—VALÈRE, SGANARELLE.

VAL. Ah! my poor Sganarelle, how glad I am to see you! I need you for a matter of importance; but, as I do not know what you are capable of doing. . . .

SGAN. What I am capable of doing, Sir? Just try me in any matter of consequence, or for something important; for instance, just send me to see what o'clock it is by some time-piece, to find out the price of butter in the market, to bait a horse, then you will find out what I am capable of doing.

VAL. That is not it; you must counterfeit a doctor.

SGAN. I, a doctor, Sir! I am ready to do whatever pleases you; but, to act the doctor, by your leave I shall do nothing of the kind; and, good Heavens, how should I set about it? Indeed, Sir, you are making fun of me.

VAL. If you will undertake this, I shall give you ten pistoles.

SGAN. Ah! when it comes to ten pistoles, I will not say that I am not a doctor; for, look here, Sir, I am not sufficiently clever to tell you the truth. But where am I to go when I am a doctor?

VAL. To Mr. Gorgibus, to see his daughter who is ill; but you are a clumsy lout who, instead of doing things rightly, might. . . .

SGAN. Eh! Good Heavens, Sir, do not worry yourself so much; I shall answer for it that I will kill a person as easily as any doctor in town. There is a common proverb: after death the doctor; but you shall find that, if I have a hand in it, they shall say: after the doctor, ware death! But nevertheless, when I think of it, it is very difficult to act the doctor, and suppose I do no good. . . .

VAL. Nothing is more easy in this case; Gorgibus is a simple, coarse fellow, who will allow himself to be non-

plussed by your discourse, provided you speak of Hippocrates and Galen, and be somewhat brazen-faced.

SGAN. Which means that I am to talk philosophy and mathematics to him. Leave it to me, if he be the easy fellow you say, I answer for it all; only come and get me a doctor's gown, tell me what I am to do, and give me my diploma, which are the ten pistoles promised.

(*Exeunt Valère and Sganarelle.*)

SCENE III.—GORGIBUS, GROS-RENÉ.

GOR. Quick, go and fetch a doctor; for my daughter is very ill, and make haste.

GROS. What the deuce! why do you wish to give your daughter to an old man? Do not you think that it is the wish to have a young man that worries her? Do you perceive the connection there is, etc. (*Gibberish*).<sup>3</sup>

GOR. Go, quickly; I see well enough that this illness will postpone the nuptials.

GROS. And that is the very thing that annoys me. I meant to line my belly well,<sup>4</sup> and behold me done out of it. I am going to fetch a doctor for myself, as well as for your daughter. I am desperate. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.—SABINE, GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE.

SAB. I find you at the right moment, uncle, to tell you some good news. I bring you the ablest doctor in the world, a man who comes from foreign lands, who is master of the most important secrets, and who will, no doubt, cure my cousin. By some good fortune he has been pointed out to me, and I have brought him hither. He is so learned that I wish with all my heart that I were ill, so that he might cure me.

GOR. Where then is he?

SAB. He is following me; look, here he is.

<sup>3</sup> Jacqueline, in *The Physician in Spite of Himself* (Act ii., Scene 1), makes the same observation. The word "gibberish" means that the actor who played the part improvised after this.

<sup>4</sup> The original has *je croyais refaire mon ventre d'une bonne carrelure*. *Carrelure* are the new soles put on shoes or boots,—hence a new lining for the stomach. As for Gros René's corpulence, see *The Love-Tiff*, Vol. I., page 79, note 1.

GOR. The doctor's most humble servant. I have sent for you to look at my daughter who is very ill; I place all my hope in you.

SGAN. Hippocrates says, and Galen, by undoubtful arguments, demonstrates that a person is not in good health when he is ill. You are right to place your hope in me; for I am the greatest, the ablest, the most learned physician in the vegetable, sensitive and mineral faculty.

GOR. I am delighted at it.

SGAN. Do not imagine that I am an ordinary physician, a commonplace doctor. All the other physicians are, in my opinion, nothing but abortions of doctors. I have peculiar talents, I have secrets. *Salamalec, salamalec.* Rodriguez, have you a heart? *Signor, si; Signor, no. Per omnia secula seculorum.*<sup>5</sup> But just let us look.

SAB. Eh! it is not he who is ill, it is his daughter.

SGAN. It matters not; the blood of the father and the daughter are but one thing; and, by the change of the father's, I can ascertain the disease of the daughter. Mr. Gorgibus, is it possible to see the urine of the patient?

GOR. Certainly; Sabine, go quickly and get the urine of my daughter. (*Exit Sabine*). Doctor, I am very much afraid that she is dying.

SGAN. Ah! let her be careful not to do so! she must not amuse herself by allowing herself to die without a prescription of the doctor.<sup>6</sup> (*Sabine re-enters*). This urine shows a great deal of heat, a great inflammation of the bowels; it is, however, not so very bad.

GOR. Eh! what, Sir, you are swallowing it?

SGAN. Do not be surprised at that: doctors, as a rule, are satisfied with looking at it; but I am a doctor out of the common, I swallow it, for by tasting it I discern much better the cause and the effects of the disease. But, to tell you the truth, there was too little to judge by: let her make water again.

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<sup>5</sup> The words which Sganarelle utters are partly Italian, Spanish, Latin, Arabic, and a quotation from Corneille's *Cid*. Whilst saying them, he feels Gorgibus' pulse.

<sup>6</sup> This is also found in the sixth Scene of the second Act of *The Physician in Spite of Himself*.

SAB. (*Goes and comes back again*). I have had a deal of trouble to make her pass water.

SGAN. Is this all! it is not worth while! Make her pass water copiously, copiously. If all patients pass water in this way, I should like to be a physician all my life.

SAB. (*Goes and comes back again*). This is all there is to be had: she cannot make any more.

SGAN. What! Mr. Gorgibus, your daughter passes but drops? She is but a poor performer, your daughter; I see well enough that I shall have to prescribe a water-making potion. Is there no way to see the patient?

SAB. She is up; if you wish, I will make her come hither.

SCENE V.—SABINE, GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE, LUCILE.

SGAN. Well! Miss, you are ill?

LU. Yes, Sir.

SGAN. So much the worse! It is a sign that you are not in good health. Do you feel any great pain in the head, or in the loins?

LU. Yes, Sir.

SGAN. That is very well. Yes, this great physician, in the chapter which he has written on the nature of animals, says . . . a hundred fine things; and, as the humours which have a connexion have much of a relation; as, for instance, as melancholy is the enemy of joy, and as the bile which spreads through the body makes us become yellow, and as nothing is more opposed to health than disease, we may say, with this great man, that your daughter is very ill. I must give you a prescription.

GOR. Quick, a table, paper and ink.

SGAN. Is there any one here who knows how to write?

GOR. Do not you know how to do so?

SGAN. Ah! I did not recollect; I have so many things running in my head that I forget half of them . . . I think it necessary that your daughter should have some fresh air; that she should go and amuse herself in the country.

GOR. We have a very fine garden, and some rooms that look out upon it; if you deem it fit, I shall make her lodge there.

SGAN. Let us go and look at the spot. (*Exeunt all.*)

SCENE VI.—THE LAWYER, *alone.*

I have heard that the daughter of Mr. Gorgibus is ill ; I must inquire about her health, and offer her my services as a friend of the whole family. Hullo, hullo ! is Mr. Gorgibus at home ?

SCENE VII.—GORGIBUS, THE LAWYER.

LAW. Having heard of your daughter's illness, I have come to tell you that I am concerned about it, and to offer you anything in my power.

GOR. I was within with the most learned of men.

LAW. Is there no means of conversing with him for a moment ?

SCENE VIII.—GORGIBUS, THE LAWYER, SGANARELLE.

GOR. Sir, this is one of my friends, a very able gentleman, who wishes to talk to you, and to converse with you.

SGAN. I have not the leisure, Mr. Gorgibus : I must attend to my patients. I will not take the right-hand side with you, Sir.

LAW. Sir, after what Mr. Gorgibus has told me of your merit and knowledge, I have the greatest desire in the world to have the honour of your acquaintance ; and I have taken the liberty to greet you with this intention ; I hope you will not take it amiss. We must admit that all those who excel in any science are worthy of great praise, and particularly those who profess medicine, as much for its own usefulness as because it contains several other sciences, which makes its perfect knowledge very difficult : and it is much to the point that Hippocrates says, in his first aphorism : *Vita brevis, ars vero longa, occasio autem præceps, experimentum periculosum, judicium difficile.*<sup>1</sup>

SGAN. (*To Gorgibus*). *Ficile tantina pota baril cambustibus.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Life is short, art is long, the occasion fleeting, the experiment full of dangers, the appreciation difficult.

<sup>2</sup> Sganarelle has remembered only part of the last word, *facile*, of the lawyer : all the rest is nonsense.



LAW. You are not one of those physicians who apply themselves only to those physics called rational or dogmatic, and I believe that you practise it daily with much success, *experientia magistra rerum*.<sup>9</sup> The first men who professed medicine were so much esteemed for this beautiful science, that they were placed among the gods for the splendid cures which they performed daily. We ought not to despise a physician for not having restored the health of his patient, inasmuch as it does not altogether depend upon his remedies, nor upon his knowledge, *interdum docta plus valet arte malum*.<sup>10</sup> I fear I am intruding, Sir: I bid you farewell, with the hope that at the next opportunity I shall have the honour of conversing with you more at leisure. Your moments are precious, etc.

(Exit Lawyer.)

GOR. What think you of this gentleman?

SGAN. He has some trifling knowledge. If he had remained a little longer, I should have led him on to some sublime and elevated matter. I must, however, take my leave of you. (*Gorgibus gives him some money*). Eh! what would you do?

GOR. I know what is due to you.

SGAN. Are you jesting, Mr. Gorgibus? I shall not accept it; I am not a mercenary man. (*Taking the money*). Your very humble servant.<sup>11</sup>

(Exit Sganarelle. Gorgibus enters his house.)

SCENE IX.—VALÈRE, alone.

I do not know what Sganarelle may have been up to: I have had no news from him, and I am very anxious where to find him. (*Sganarelle comes back in his servant's dress*). Good, here he is. Well! Sganarelle, what have you done since I saw you?

<sup>9</sup> It is experience which teaches all things. This is one of Erasmus' adages, but slightly altered in sense and in the order of the words.

<sup>10</sup> This is from Ovid's *Epistles*. Sometimes the evil is stronger than art and science.

<sup>11</sup> This is also found in the eighth Scene of the second Act of *The Physician in Spite of Himself*.

## SCENE X.—VALÈRE, SGANARELLE.

SGAN. Wonder upon wonder ; I have managed so well that Gorgibus takes me for a very able doctor. I have introduced myself into his house ; I have advised him to give his daughter fresh air ; she is now in an apartment at the end of the garden, so that she is far away from the old man, and you may go and see her very easily,

VAL. Ah, what joy you are giving me ! Without losing any time, I shall go and see her immediately. (*Exit.*)

SGAN. One must confess that this Mr. Gorgibus is a regular nincompoop to allow himself to be deceived in this manner. (*Perceiving Gorgibus*). Ah ! good Heavens, all is lost ; this one blow knocks the whole of the medical faculty down ; but I must hoodwink him.

## SCENE XI.—SGANARELLE, GORGIBUS.

GOR. Good-day, Sir.

SGAN. Your servant, Sir ; you behold a poor fellow in despair : perhaps you may know a physician who has lately arrived in this town, who performs some wonderful cures.

GOR. Yes, I do know him ; he has just gone away from here.

SGAN. I am his brother, Sir : we are twins ; and, as we resemble each other very much, we are often taken for one another.

GOR. May the deuce take me<sup>13</sup> if I have not been deceived by it. And what is your name ?

SGAN. Narcissus, Sir, at your service. You must know that, being in his study, I spilt two vials of essence which were at the edge of his table. At once he flew into such a violent rage with me, that he has turned me out of his house ; he never wishes to see me any more, so that I am a poor wretch at present, without support, without any means, without an acquaintance.

GOR. Come, I will make your peace ; I am one of his friends, and I promise to make it up for you with him ; I shall speak to him about it the moment I see him.

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<sup>13</sup> The original has *Je me dédonne au diable*. See *The Jealousy of le Barbouillé*, page 584, note 10.

SGAN. I shall be much obliged to you, Mr. Gorgibus.  
(*Exit Sganarelle, who re-enters immediately  
in his doctor's gown.*)

SCENE XII.—SGANARELLE, GORGIBUS.

SGAN. One must admit that if patients will not follow the orders of the doctor, and give themselves up to debauch . . .

GOR. Your very humble servant, Doctor. I have come to ask you a favour.

SGAN. What is it, Sir? Is it a question of rendering you a service?

GOR. I have just met your brother, Sir, who is exceedingly sorry to . . .

SGAN. He is a rogue, Mr. Gorgibus.

GOR. I can answer for it that he so much regrets that he has made you angry . . .

SGAN. He is a sot, Mr. Gorgibus.

GOR. Eh! Sir, do you wish to drive the poor fellow to despair?

SGAN. Let me hear no more about him; but look at the impertinence of the rogue to come and find you to make his peace for him; I beg of you to say no more about him.

GOR. In Heaven's name, Doctor! do this for my sake. If I can oblige you in any other thing, I will do so with all my heart. I have pledged myself to this, and . . .

SGAN. You ask me with so much urgency that although I had sworn never to pardon him, come, shake hands, I pardon him. I assure you that I have done great violence to myself, and that I must feel very kindly towards you. Farewell, Mr. Gorgibus.

(*Gorgibus enters his house, exit Sganarelle.*)

SCENE XIII.—VALÈRE, SGANARELLE.

VAL. I must admit that I could never have believed that Sganarelle could have acquitted himself so well of his task. (*Sganarelle enters in his servant's dress.*) Ah! my dear fellow, under what obligations I am to you! what joy I have! and . . .

SGAN. Upon my word, you are speaking very easily about it. Gorgibus fell in with me ; and, without some trick which I contrived, the whole of the train would have been discovered. (*Perceiving Gorgibus*). But be off, here he is. (*Exit Valère*.)

SCENE XIV.—GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE.

GOR. I was looking everywhere for you to tell you that I have spoken to your brother : he has pledged me his word that he would forgive you ; but, to make more sure of it, I wish him to embrace you in my presence ; go into my house, and I shall go and fetch him.

SGAN. Ah ! Mr. Gorgibus, I do not think you will find him just now ; and besides, I shall not remain in your house : I fear his anger too much.

GOR. Ah ! but you shall remain, for I will lock you in. I am going now to fetch your brother ; fear nothing, I answer for it that he is no longer angry. (*Exit Gorgibus*.)

SGAN. (*From the window*). In truth I am caught this time ; there is no longer a means of escape: The cloud is very thick, and I am sorely afraid that, if it bursts, it will hail plentiful cudgel-blows on my back, or that, by some prescription much stronger than that of any doctor, they will apply at least a royal plaster to my shoulders.<sup>18</sup> My prospects look very bad : but why despair ? Since I have done so much, let us play the rogue to the end. Yes, yes, I must still get out of it, and show that Sganarelle is the king of rogues.

(*Sganarelle jumps through the window and exits.*)

SCENE XV.—GROS-RENÉ, GORGIBUS, SGANARELLE.

GROS. Ah ! upon my word, this is funny ! what the deuce are they leaping through the windows for ! I must remain here, and see what all this will lead to.

GOR. I cannot find this doctor ; I do not know where the deuce he has hid himself. (*Perceiving Sganarelle, who is coming back in a doctor's gown*). But here he is. Sir, it is not sufficient to have pardoned your brother ; I

<sup>18</sup> Sganarelle means by "a royal plaster" a brand.

beseech you, for my satisfaction, to embrace him: he is in my house, and I have been looking for you everywhere to entreat you to make this reconciliation in my presence.

SGAN. You are jesting, Mr. Gorgibus; is it not sufficient that I pardon him? I never wish to see him again.

GOR. But, Sir, for the love of me.

SGAN. I can refuse you nothing: tell him to come down.

*(While Gorgibus enters the house by the door, Sganarelle gets in at the window.)*

GOR. *(At the window)*. Here is your brother waiting for you below; he has promised me to do all you wish.

SGAN. *(At the window)*. Mr. Gorgibus, I entreat you to make him come here; I beseech you let it be in private that I ask his pardon, for no doubt he will inflict a hundred reprimands, a hundred reproaches upon me before every one.

*(Gorgibus comes out of his house by the door. Sganarelle by the window.)*

GOR. Well, then, I will tell him so . . . Sir, he says he is ashamed, and begs you to come in, so that he may ask your pardon in private. Here is the key; you can go in; I pray you not to refuse me, and to give me this satisfaction.

SGAN. There is nothing I would not do for your satisfaction; you shall hear in what manner I will treat him. *(At the window)*. Ah! here you are, you rogue.—Brother, I ask your pardon, I assure you that it was not my fault.—Not your fault, you good-for-nothing, you rogue, I will teach you manners, to have the audacity to bother Mr. Gorgibus, to pester his brain with your stupid tricks!—Brother—Hold your tongue, I tell you—I will not disoblige . . . Hold your tongue, you rogue.

GROS. Who the deuce think you, is in your house at present?

GOR. It is the doctor and Narcissus, his brother; they had a little quarrel, and they are making it up.

GROS. The deuce take it! they are but one.

SGAN. *(At the window)*. So that you are, I will teach you how to behave. How he lowers his eyes! he knows

well enough that he has done wrong, the hang-dog ! Ah ! the hypocrite, how he pretends to be a saint ?

GROS. Just ask him a moment, Sir, to place his brother at the window.

GOR. I say, doctor, I pray you to make your brother come to the window.

SGAN. (*From the window*). He is unworthy to be seen by decent people, and besides I cannot bear him near me.

GOR. Do not refuse me this favour, Sir, after all those you have granted me.

SGAN. (*From the window*). Really, Mr. Gorgibus, you have such a power over me that I can refuse you nothing. Show yourself, you rogue. (*After having disappeared for a moment, he comes back in his servant's clothes*). —Mr. Gorgibus, I am obliged to you. (*He disappears once more, and re-appears immediately, in his doctor's gown*). —Well ! have you *once more* seen this image of a good-for-nothing ?

GROS. Upon my word, they are but one ; and, to prove it, just tell him that you would like to see them together.

GOR. But do me the favor to make him appear together with you, and to embrace him before me at the window.

SGAN. (*From the window*). It is a thing which I would refuse to any one but you ; but, to show you that I will do anything for the love of you, I will resolve to do it, though with difficulty, and wish him beforehand to ask your pardon for all the trouble which he has given you. — Yes, Mr. Gorgibus, I ask your pardon for having importuned you so much, and promise you, brother, in the presence of Mr. Gorgibus here, to behave so well for the future, that you shall have no more grounds of complaint, at the same time entreating you to think no more about what has passed.

(*He embraces his cap and his collar,  
which he has placed on his elbow.*)

GOR. Well, are they not both there ?

GROS. Ah ! upon my word, he is a sorcerer.

SGAN. (*Coming out of the house, as the doctor*). Here is the key of your house which I return to you, Sir ; I did